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## **The Impact of Leadership on the Ethical Behaviour of British Private Security Companies**

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**The Impact of Leadership on the Ethical Behaviour  
of British Private Security Companies**

**Dissertation**

Submitted to the  
Faculty of King's College London  
War Studies Department

in Partial Fulfilment of  
the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

by

**Philip A. Strand**

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## **Abstract**

Ensuring high ethical standards for British Private Security Companies (PSCs) and their contractors is a major concern for government, civil society, and industry stakeholders. This concern is currently being addressed through regulatory efforts; however, evidence suggests that even if external monitoring and regulatory systems were improved, the ethical climates within individual companies and the actions of immediate supervisors would still have more influence over contractors' behaviour than written regulations.

This thesis identifies and analyzes how PSC leaders at multiple levels of decision-making authority can influence the ethical behaviour of contractors in places where governments and NGOs have limited monitoring or disciplinary power. Some discussion is included of how other leaders from client and training organizations might also leverage leadership skills and behaviours to exert an additional degree of influence. In accordance with Charmaz's (2006) constructivist grounded theory methodology, data was collected via a series of semi-structured interviews with PSC leaders throughout PSC hierarchies. Interview data was then analysed using the 'constant comparative method' and 'theoretical integration.' Alternate sources of data, including existing leadership theories and PSC literature, were used to triangulate the data obtained during interviews. Sources of information external to the private security industry were used to provide additional support for the assertions of this thesis after the interview analyses were complete.

The end result of this thesis' analyses is new information that helps to explain how, why, and to what extent leadership influences the ethical behaviour of British private security contractors in hostile environments. As such, this thesis makes original contributions to the fields of both leadership and PSC research. First, this thesis provides new information that suggests specific leadership skills and behaviours that impact on the ethical behaviour of personnel within a unique type of organization: Private Security Companies. Secondly, this thesis helps to inform contemporary debates about civil society's ability to ensure that PSC personnel behave according to social and ethical norms; historically, such debates have not been informed by leadership research. This thesis concludes with a discussion of the wider relevancy of this research's findings.

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I would also like to thank many anonymous leaders in the private security industry who entrusted me with their thoughts and experiences during the course of this project. I am humbled to have had the privilege of working with you in an effort to understand “ground truths” about the industry. Your insights and perspectives not only made this project possible, but helped me to grow on a personal level as well. Without medals, ceremonies, or pageantry, you’ve made sacrifices that many people couldn’t begin to imagine.

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## **Personal Motivations for this Research**

Since beginning my defence and security career in the US Army's Reserve Officer Training Corps in 1998, I have had a keen interest in understanding the processes by which militaries train, develop, and harness leadership to achieve organizational goals. Upon leaving military service in 2007 at the rank of captain, I completed an MBA program at Mannheim Business School where the importance of leadership was again acknowledged in a business context. Several subsequent years of consulting in the commercial sector made it clear that all organizations were not equally capable of leveraging the power of leadership.

My first interest in the private security industry developed in late 2008 as I sought positions where I could make use of both my military and business experience. Unfortunately, learning about the private security industry was difficult. Mainstream media appeared to do little besides sensationalize or demonize PSC activities. Many criticisms were aimed at PSCs. Paramilitary imagery, inadequate accountability structures, and violence done to or by PSC personnel fuelled most mainstream media stories. While thinking about these criticisms, my military experience led me to suspect that many of the challenges faced by PSCs today are quite similar to challenges faced by military leaders. I noticed that, while many military challenges are discussed in terms of leadership-oriented solutions, discussions of leadership within PSCs were notably absent.

I first approached KCL's War Studies department in early 2009 to express my interest in researching leadership and ethics within the private security industry. Almost simultaneously, I received an offer to work for a prominent British PSC operating in Baghdad. I believed that first-person experience in the industry would help me to better-understand the industry. Additionally, I was personally excited to take on challenging and important roles in interesting places. With future academic opportunities in mind, I gladly accepted the job offer and spent nearly two years working alongside and learning from a great many experienced private security professionals. By the time I finished my last contracting role in Afghanistan in 2011, I believed there was a lot of potential for PSCs to contribute to the defence and security of the UK. I also believed, however, that (as with militaries) there are some serious risks associated with employing and relying on men with guns in foreign countries. Careful examination of the industry is merited to ensure that PSCs contribute real value – as opposed to undermining the very security that they are hired to provide. It is my sincere hope that this thesis contributes to the examination of the private security industry in a fair and meaningful way.

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## List of Acronyms

2IC	Second-in-Charge / Second-in-Command
ACOD	Armed Contractor Oversight Division
ANSI	American National Standards Institute
ASIS	American Society for Industrial Security
BAPSC	British Association of Private Security Companies
CBO	Congressional Budget Office
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CI Questions	Critical Incident Questions
CONOC	Contractor Operations Center
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
DCAF	Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces
DOD	Department of Defence
EOF	Escalation of Force
ERC	Ethics Resource Center
FCO	Foreign Commonwealth Office
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GT	Grounded Theory
ICoC	International Code of Conduct
ID(s)	Identify (Identifies)
IHL	International Humanitarian Laws
IPOA	International Peace Operations Association
ISOA	International Stability Operations Association
LN	Local National
MEJA	Military Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Act
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NVivo10	Computer software that assists in coding
OE questions	Open Ended Questions
P&L	Profits and Losses
PMC	Private Military Company
PMSC	Private Military / Security Company
PMSRG	Private Military & Security Research Group
PR	Public Relations
PSC	Private Security Company
PSD	Personal Security Detail (mobile)
ROE	Rules of Engagement
RSM	Regimental Sergeant Major (military rank)
RUF	Rules of the Use of Force
SCEG	Security in Complex Environments Groups
SIA	Security Industry Authority
SF	Special Forces (elite military unit)
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TCN	Third-Country National
TL	Team Leader
UCMJ	Uniform Code of Military Justice
WO1	Warrant Officer - Grade 1 (military rank)

## Chapter One: Introduction

The current trend of Western government reliance on Private Security Companies (PSCs) during security operations and the expectation that armed private contractors will continue to perform roles during future operations seems to increase the importance of understanding PSCs.<sup>1</sup> The use of PSCs has generated a large amount of debate because of their potential to greatly affect the outcome of contemporary security operations.<sup>2</sup> Armed contractors generally carry out their duties in the public sphere, they are generally in close contact with other participants of security operations, and they are often exposed to high levels of physical danger and mental stress. Thus, the behaviour of armed contractors has the potential to influence large populations and security agendas at national and international levels.<sup>3</sup>

Ensuring control over the behaviour of PSCs and their contractors appears to be a major concern for civil society, evidenced by a large number of civilian, government, and industry publications.<sup>4</sup> This thesis defines civil society as “a sphere of social interaction between [the] economy and state, composed above all of the intimate sphere (especially the family), the sphere of associations (especially voluntary associations), social movements, and forms of public communication.”<sup>5</sup> Particularly in liberal, Western democracies where governments and free market economies are subordinate to the will of civilians, civil society’s concerns can be seen as influential drivers underlying those concerns addressed by governments and industries.<sup>6</sup>

To be specific, civil society appears to be most concerned with the behaviour of PSCs as it relates to inflicting or supporting undesired violence and engaging in corrupt or unfair

---

<sup>1</sup> (Foreign Commonwealth Office, 2002, para. 27-28)

<sup>2</sup> (Kinsey, 2006, p. 152)

<sup>3</sup> Dunigan (2011, p. 71) and Whyte’s (2003, pp. 595–596) examples of unethical PSC behaviours negatively affecting national and international security agendas suggest that both high- and low-profile incidences of PSC misbehaviour influence local populations’ perceptions of PSCs.

<sup>4</sup> The US, UK, and other governments have published many documents regarding the behaviour of PSCs (Australian Government, 2014; South African Ministry for Safety and Security, 2001; UK Foreign Affairs Committee, 2002a, 2002b, 2009; US Government: Congressional Budget Office, 2008; US Government: Government Accountability Office, 2005, 2006, 2010). Researchers and members of civil society have also created a large body of literature regarding the behaviour of PSCs (D. Brooks & Streng, 2012; Cockayne et al., 2009; Kinsey & Patterson, 2012; Machairas, 2014; Pattison, 2014; Ranito, 2014). And industry representatives have self-published or participated in the publication of many documents (ASIS International, 2012c, 2012d; BAPSC, 2006; DFAE, 2008; ICRC, 2010; Sandline International, 1998).

<sup>5</sup> (Cohen, 1994, p. ix)

<sup>6</sup> The term “civil society” was originally coined to distinguish civilians from “bourgeois” or “ruling class” society. Cohen (1994, pp. xiii–ix) uses the term to further distinguish between civilians and the economy (“industry”). Although civil society, government, and industry have wills of their own, these entities do not work against each other by definition. Liberal democracies and free market economies are “mediating spheres through which civil society can gain influence over political-administrative and economic processes” (Cohen, 1994, pp. x–xi).

business practices. This perception is supported by a review of the primary rules, standards, codes, and principles that have been employed to provide guidelines for morally right behaviour and integrity in specific situations involving PSCs. International Humanitarian Laws (IHLs) outlined by the UN and the Geneva Convention seek to protect non-combatants and to limit unnecessary loss during conflicts.<sup>7</sup> The ICRC, an organization that supports the creation and implementation of IHLs, emphasizes that these laws pertain equally to PSCs.<sup>8</sup> The Montreux Document seeks to remind States of their obligations to uphold “IHLs and human rights laws whenever Private Military & Security Companies (PMSCs) are present in armed conflicts.”<sup>9</sup> Monitoring and controlling PMSCs’ use of force is emphasized throughout the document. The International Code of Conduct (ICoC) for Private Security Companies provides PSCs with a “commonly-agreed set of principles” that help to ensure that PSCs’ operations are consistent with IHLs and it goes one step further by recognizing that PSCs are commercial organizations. The ICoC discusses IHLs from a commercial perspective and addresses corporate standards of business conduct and the interests of clients.<sup>10</sup> The use of force, torture, degrading punishments, slavery, child labour, sexual exploitation, gender-based violence, and discrimination are specifically addressed as key points of concern. ISO 9001 industry standards codified in PSC.1 outline minimum requirements for PSC management systems to ensure systems are “consistent with respect for human rights, legal obligations, and good practices related to operations of [PSCs].”<sup>11</sup> Again, respect for human rights (particularly those of injured people and detainees) and the use of force are specifically addressed as key points of concern. And, finally, self-prescribed standard operating procedures implemented by corporate-level PSC leaders are designed to limit the risk of PSC personnel inflicting unnecessary damage or engaging in illegal business practices in the course of their day-to-day activities. According to the definition of “ethical behaviour” accepted by this thesis, violations of or non-compliance with any of the rules, standards, codes, and principles mentioned above constitutes unethical behaviour.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> As summarized by the ICRC (2004), IHLs are primarily set out in the four Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I of the United Nations (1949).

<sup>8</sup> PMSCs “working in situations of armed conflict are also obliged to respect the provisions of IHL” (ICRC, 2013b, p. 1)

<sup>9</sup> (DFAE, 2008, p. 31)

<sup>10</sup> (ICRC, 2010, p. 3)

<sup>11</sup> (ASIS International, 2012c, *Abstract*) “The PSC.1 standard establishes an auditable mechanism for [PSCs] to provide demonstrable commitment, conformance, and accountability to the principles outlined in the ICoC and best practices for the Montreux Document.” (ASIS International, 2012b, p. 1)

<sup>12</sup> This thesis defines ethical behaviour as: “adhering to rules, standards, codes, or principles that provide guidelines for morally right behaviour and integrity in specific situations.” This definition is derived from

A review of the types of incidences that have been cited by critics as problematic further supports this thesis's assertion that civil society is most concerned with the behaviour of PSCs as it relates to inflicting or supporting undesired violence and engaging in corrupt or unfair business practices. PSCs and individual contractors have been criticized for excessive use of force including manslaughter and murder. Excessively violent incidences involving PSCs include the Nisour Square Massacre where Blackwater personnel killed 17 Iraqi civilians on 16 November 2007.<sup>13</sup> Blackwater is an example of a PSC that was notorious for its use of force in Iraq and Afghanistan. The company was cited for killing and wounding civilians<sup>14</sup> and even the Iraqi Vice President's own bodyguard in 2006.<sup>15</sup> PSCs have also been criticized for sourcing weapons and employees in ways that potentially support criminal violence, including black market procurement and under-vetting.<sup>16</sup> NGO and federal government investigations into PSCs and black market arms sales underline civil society's concern that some PSCs procure weapons and supplies in ways that can encourage undesired violence. The testimony of Ronald Boline, a former Triple Canopy manager, during a criminal investigation explained how money paid for stolen cars and black market weapons and equipment supports organized crime and insurgents who violated human rights.<sup>17</sup> PSCs have also been directly linked to human rights abuses that include including sex-slave trafficking and torture. DynCorp personnel were, for example, investigated for sex-slave trafficking in the Balkans in 2000<sup>18</sup> and detainees recounted abuses committed by Titan and CACI personnel at the infamous Abu Ghraib prison in 2004. Abuses at Abu Ghraib included beatings, forced nudity, being "repeatedly shot in the head with a taser gun", and witnessing the "rape [of] a female detainee."<sup>19</sup> Finally, PSCs and individual contractors have been criticised for criminal acts of corporate 'fraud, waste, and abuse' that have included

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Lewis's (1985, p. 381) discussion of ethics in a commercial context and explained in greater detail in Chapter Two: *Review of Literature* in the section entitled *Defining "Ethical Behaviour"*.

<sup>13</sup> (Woolf, 2015)

<sup>14</sup> (DeWinter-Schmitt, 2011)

<sup>15</sup> "The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform reported...that Blackwater engaged in 195 shootings since 2005, firing the first shots 84% of the time"(Amnesty International, 2015). Further incidences include 'trophy videos' and complaints of PSC personnel indiscriminately shooting civilians (Madsen, 2005) and the G4S contractor, Danny Fitzsimons, who shot two colleagues in August 2009 (Topping, 2015).

<sup>16</sup> (Beswick & Jackson, 2014, p. 145; Filkins, 2010; Kawa, 2011; Miller, 2009)

<sup>17</sup> (Boline, 2007) Other incidents were prevalent. For example, a US Senate (2010) report further reveals that ArmourGroup and EODT funded anti-coalition (Taliban) Afghan local warlords during its efforts to supply security guards to a major US military installation.

<sup>18</sup> (Maffai, 2009, p. 110)

<sup>19</sup> (Ackerman, 2014) Although many of the contracted personnel at Abu Ghraib were not armed with guns, their positions of power, relative to the detainees, were arguably, analogous to those positions inhabited by armed PSC personnel operating amongst unarmed civilians. The relevance of this incident is discussed in detail in Chapter Two: *Review of Literature* in the section entitled *Controlling the Behaviour of Private Security Companies*.

overbilling, under-servicing, and unfair lobbying. Incidences of corporate fraud, waste, and abuse involving PSCs include Custer Battles defrauding the US government of up to \$50 million,<sup>20</sup> multiple PSCs accepting payment in exchange for absent or undertrained, underequipped personnel,<sup>21</sup> and DynCorp and other PSCs providing \$2.2 million to political campaigns to gain business favour.<sup>22</sup> The hiring of Aegis Defence Services, a PSC in Iraq that controlled the operations of all other PSCs, has also been questioned as an oversight weakness that failed to mitigate fraud, waste, and abuse.<sup>23</sup> Each of these cases were rapidly followed by legal reviews to determine which rules, standards, codes, and/or principles (if any) were violated and discussions of changes that might be enacted to prevent further violations.

Civil society's apparent concerns about the behaviour of PSCs are currently being addressed through regulatory efforts but, because external control agents have limited abilities to monitor and/or discipline PSCs in hostile environments, PSCs remain primarily accountable to voluntary systems of self-regulation. This thesis defines a hostile environment as a "country, region or specified area subject to war, insurrection, civil unrest, terrorism or extreme levels of crime, banditry, lawlessness, [or] public disorder."<sup>24</sup> A defining feature of hostile environments is that basic commodities, movement, communication, and information are restricted to the point that states and international authorities have limited abilities to monitor and/or enforce regulations.<sup>25</sup> Both political and practical factors can increase the hostility of an environment which can, in turn, degrade the power of regulating authorities.

Although a variety of rules, standards, codes, and principles<sup>26</sup> have been established since the global private security industry began experiencing rapid growth in 2001,<sup>27</sup> effective self-regulation is dependent on monitoring and enforcement by internal control agents (PSC leaders), as opposed to externally-appointed control agents (such as government authorities, NGOs, or media organizations). Many critics harbour serious concerns about relying on internal control agents to monitor and influence the willingness of PSCs to adhere to

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<sup>20</sup> (Cray, 2006; Varin, 2014, p. 117)

<sup>21</sup> (Hammes, 2011, p. 30)

<sup>22</sup> (Minow, 2004, p. 1022)

<sup>23</sup> (Minow, 2004, pp. 1010–1011)

<sup>24</sup> (BBC News, 2013)

<sup>25</sup> (Maogoto & Sheehy, 2009, p. 131)

<sup>26</sup> (DFAE, 2008; ICRC, 2010; United Nations, 1949)

<sup>27</sup> Western military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan greatly accelerated the growth of the armed private security industry in hostile environments (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2009, p. 1; Schreier & Caparini, 2005, p. 4).

emplaced rules, standards, codes, and principles.<sup>28</sup> The tools and techniques that PSC leaders can leverage to ensure the ethical behaviour of their subordinates are different from those available to external control agents. Lacking legal authority, PSC leaders must rely on their individual leadership capabilities to leverage power and to influence others. The extent to which the leadership skills and behaviours of PSC leaders can influence the behaviour of PSC personnel is therefore a critical issue that needs to be understood before informed judgments can be made about civil society's ability to control PSCs through regulatory efforts.

This doctoral thesis seeks to contribute to the understanding of leadership's impact on ethical behaviour within the context of PSCs, equally and uniquely enhancing two bodies of knowledge: that of PSCs and that of leadership. To achieve this goal, this thesis identifies and analyzes how PSC leaders at multiple levels of decision-making authority can influence the ethical behaviour of PSCs and their contractors. The remainder of this introduction explains a gap that appears to exist in research regarding ethical behaviour, PSCs, and leadership and how this thesis can contribute to existing debates. The thesis's central and sub-questions are explained, the thesis's significance is clarified, and some limitations of the research underlying this thesis are noted. This introduction ends with a summary that outlines the content of the remaining chapters of the thesis.

## Ensuring the Ethical Behaviour of Private Security Companies

Existing PSC research has generated over a decade of inconclusive debate on a theme that could be further informed by leadership theories: how to ensure the ethical behaviour of PSCs. Literature suggests that ethical behaviour is a critical factor of success for PSCs but, thus far, neither British nor American debates have included important discussions of leadership, despite evidence indicating that leadership is to some extent influential in organizations with characteristics similar to PSCs.<sup>29</sup> Although extant British and American leadership studies have not been conducted within the specific context of PSCs, there is also nothing in them that would preclude their results from applying to PSCs.<sup>30</sup> Further research,

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<sup>28</sup> Many researchers have addressed the inadequacies of self-regulation and stakeholders' failures to skilfully leverage market forces to ensure that PSC personnel behave according to social and ethical norms (De Nevers, 2010; Hurst, 2010; Maffai, 2009).

<sup>29</sup> Longitudinal research by the Ethics Resource Center (2000, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011) demonstrates leadership's influence on commercial and government organizations and is discussed in detail in *Chapter Two: Review of Literature*

<sup>30</sup> (Deshpande, Joseph, & Prasad, 2008; Treviño, Butterfield, & McCabe, 1998, p. 471; Treviño, Weaver, & Reynolds, 2006, p. 955)

such as the research underlying this thesis, is necessary to demonstrate the extent to which corporate-level leadership might impact upon ethical behaviour within PSCs.

Discussions of how to ensure the ethical behaviour of PSCs have historically focused on regulatory bodies and legal mechanisms of enforcement.<sup>31</sup> To date, major difficulties have been encountered in establishing regulatory frameworks for the private security industry because (as discussed in the preceding section) PSCs operate in hostile environments. Despite difficulties, notable international regulatory advances have been achieved. The Montreux Document drafted in 2008 represented an early attempt to influence the behaviour of the modern international private security industry. While the Montreux Document does not “establish new regulations,” it does “provide guidance” to States and PSCs “on a number of thorny legal and practical points, on the basis of existing international law.”<sup>32</sup> The International Code of Conduct for Private Security Providers (ICoC) followed the Montreux Document to “set forth a commonly-agreed set of principles for PSCs and to establish a foundation to translate those principles into related standards as well as governance and oversight mechanisms.”<sup>33</sup> And finally, ANSI/ASIS, a major international organization for security professionals, published standards known as PSC.1 which refer to the Montreux Document and the ICoC “to provide requirements and guidance for a management system with measureable criteria...consistent with respect for human rights, legal obligations, and good practices related to [PSC operations] in conditions where governance and rule of law have been undermined by conflict or disaster.”<sup>34</sup>

At its own pace, the UK has also made regulatory advances. Following the so-called “Sandline Affair” in 1998,<sup>35</sup> the UK Government outlined its options for regulating British Private Military and Security Companies in a “Green Paper”, which ultimately led to a decision to allow the industry to regulate itself.<sup>36</sup> To date, the UK government appears to continue to prefer to allow the industry to create its own regulatory mechanisms and has

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<sup>31</sup> There are many articles from the last decade debating why and how to regulate the industry (Bosch, 2007; Cameron, 2007; Chesterman & Lehnardt, 2007a; DFAE, 2008; Dumlupinar, 2010; Francioni, 2008; Holmqvist, 2005; ICRC, 2010; Kinsey, 2005a, 2006; Krahmann, 2005b, 2012; Maogoto & Sheehy, 2006; McNaylor, 2010)

<sup>32</sup> (DFAE, 2008, p. 5)

<sup>33</sup> (ICRC, 2010, p. 3)

<sup>34</sup> (ASIS International, 2012c, p. 1)

<sup>35</sup> The Sandline Affair occurred when “arms were delivered by a British [PSC] to Sierra Leone for use by President Kabbah's forces in contravention of a United Kingdom arms embargo.” (UK Foreign Affairs Committee, 1999)

<sup>36</sup> (Foreign Commonwealth Office, 2002; UK Foreign Affairs Committee, 2002a, 2002b)

allowed the industry to adopt ANSI/ASIS's PSC.1 standards as an acceptable baseline for ethical behaviour.<sup>37</sup>

Regardless of regulatory advances, evidence (discussed in detail in Chapter Two: *Review of Literature*) suggests that the mere act of regulating the private security industry is unlikely to bring about ethical behaviour. Even in permissive environments characterized by firmly established regulations and monitoring mechanisms, the rule of law does not guarantee ethical behaviour. Enron, Arthur Andersen, WorldCom, Tyco, and Adelphia are examples of commercial companies involved in unfair and unethical business practices, despite extensive regulation and monitoring in their industries.<sup>38</sup> Regulation may indeed have an important role to play, but other influences beyond regulations must be acknowledged. For example, formal and informal leaders can also directly influence the ethical decision-making and ethical capacities of employees.<sup>39</sup> When regulatory and monitoring efforts are weak,<sup>40</sup> the relative importance of leadership seems to magnify. Taking the leadership-focused research of McCuddy, the Ethics Resource Center (ERC), Dukerich et al., and Neubert et al. into consideration, this thesis argues that a better understanding of the leadership skills and behaviours of PSC personnel is necessary to understand and predict the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel in hostile environments.<sup>41</sup> This thesis seeks to present a new understanding of the drivers of ethical behaviour within PSCs that goes beyond commercial or externally imposed motivations and accounts for other factors that may be equally or more influential.

### Leadership as an Important Influence Factor

Discussions of the extent to which leadership factors are influential have historically focused on either military or commercial organizations.<sup>42</sup> To assume that principles from the

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<sup>37</sup> (ASIS International, 2012b)

<sup>38</sup> (McCuddy, 2008, p. 10); these cases have led many researchers to look beyond legal influences on behaviour and towards leadership as an influence factor (Ethics Resource Center, 2007, p. 9).

<sup>39</sup> These research projects, spaced nearly 20 years apart, arrived to similar conclusions about leadership's influence on the ethical behaviour of employees in the USA (Dukerich, Nichols, Elm, & Vollrath, 1990a, p. 487; Neubert, Carlson, Kacmar, Roberts, & Chonko, 2009, p. 165). Industry within the USA was heavily regulated during both of these periods of time and yet ethical behaviour was still, in large part, shown to be influenced by co-workers and supervisors.

<sup>40</sup> Cockayne (2008, pp. 427–428) illustrates the lack of existing regulatory and monitoring measures as he discusses the Montreux Document, the first contemporary attempt to regulate the ethical behaviour of PSCs at an international level. Cockayne asserts that, although significant steps forward have been taken since 2008, the regulatory environment remains mostly voluntary (and weak).

<sup>41</sup> (Dukerich et al., 1990a; Ethics Resource Center, 2007; McCuddy, 2008; Neubert et al., 2009)

<sup>42</sup> Notable studies have already been conducted on military and commercial organizations to determine leadership skills and behaviours that contribute to organizational success (Bohn, 2002; Guzzo & Dickson, 1996; R. House, Javidan, Hanges, & Dorfman, 2002). "Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness"



military or commercial sectors automatically apply to PSCs would require ignoring the importance of context, which affects and constrains leader behaviours and priorities.<sup>43</sup> Since the 1990s, leadership researchers have become increasingly aware of the affect of context on internal validity.<sup>44</sup> PSCs are unique organizations containing characteristics of both military and commercial organizations. To date, no significant research specific to leadership within the context of PSCs has been conducted to determine the extent to which leadership theories derived from studies conducted on military and civilian organizations are applicable to PSCs. Based on previous determinations of the importance of context, this thesis argues that a full understanding of the impact of leadership within PSCs cannot be gained by extrapolating from research done on purely military or purely commercial organizations. Research specific to leadership within the context of PSCs is required.

While there is strong evidence to suggest that leadership factors, such as skills and behaviours, directly influence ethical behaviour (presented in Chapter Two: *Review of Literature*), the exact magnitude of leadership's influence on PSCs is not entirely clear. Under some circumstances, environmental factors may have more influence on the behaviour of organizations and people than leadership factors. Aldrich, Meindl et al., Salancik and Pfeffer, and Salancik et al. call into question the exact magnitude of leadership's influence.<sup>45</sup> The real impact of leadership is further obscured by strong leader tendencies to (often unknowingly) assign blame for failure to environmental factors while taking credit for success regardless of environmental factors.<sup>46</sup> Leadership theories must be tested under a wider set of conditions to help clarify the link between leadership and ethical behaviour. PSCs offer a unique set of conditions on which leadership theories can be further tested.

Exactly which leadership factors are most influential under certain conditions is also not entirely clear. Benest, for example, suggests eight skills and behaviours that are important to

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(GLOBE) is a research program that compares cultures and attributes of effective leadership in a research project involving 61 nations (R. House et al., 2002).

<sup>43</sup> The importance of context in leadership research has been questioned (Rousseau & Fried, 2001, p. 2) and examined from the perspective of individual leadership models and instruments (Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramaniam, 2003, p. 283), how researchers perceive context (Blair & Hunt, 1986, p. 148), and ways that researchers can better account for context (Johns, 2001; Rousseau & Fried, 2001). There is a general consensus that research results are often valid only within the context in which they were obtained.

<sup>44</sup> (Brutus & Duniewicz, 2012, p. 208)

<sup>45</sup> Aldrich (1999) notes that organizations (particularly businesses) are created and/or disbanded due to many influences unrelated to leadership. Meindl, Ehrlich, & Dukerich (1985, p. 98) and Salancik & Pfeffer (1977, p. 492) determined that leadership's influence is often misunderstood and exaggerated. Salancik, Pfeffer, & Kelly (1978, p. 253) use contingency theory to show that leader influence can change according to changes in the environment.

<sup>46</sup>(Salancik & Meindl, 1984, p. 251)

influential, ethical military leadership.<sup>47</sup> Kolditz cites seven influential skills and behaviours.<sup>48</sup> Yukl and Van Fleet note a different seven skills and behaviours.<sup>49</sup> Ministry and Department of Defence publications by the US, UK, and Australian governments also make claims about the key skills and behaviours that characterize effective, ethical military leadership.<sup>50</sup> Military leadership studies do not appear to question that leadership influences success; however, no two studies seem to agree on exactly which leadership skills and behaviours are most positively influential. While any of these lists of attributes, skills and behaviours might help many military leaders to be influential much of the time, conclusive evidence that any particular leadership factors are universally necessary for successful leadership has yet to be published.

Commercially-oriented researchers have also published lists of leader qualities that can, in many circumstances, be positively correlated to successful, ethical leadership. However, like research conducted on military organizations, these lists vary widely. The results of many commercial leadership studies also bear little resemblance to those lists published for military organizations. Kouzes and Posner, for example, stand firmly behind five behaviours that they believe are most important to ethical leadership.<sup>51</sup> Judge et al. reviews 10 more lists of necessary leadership skills and behaviours generated by 10 different leadership researchers. Each list includes ethically-oriented behaviours.<sup>52</sup> Bass dedicates an entire chapter to describing lists of skills and behaviours supported by dozens of leadership researchers.<sup>53</sup> And Burns argues that only “transforming” leadership can be ethical. Burns’ list is open-ended to allow for any skill or behaviour that helps a leader to recognize “potential motives in

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<sup>47</sup> Benest (2007, p. 11, 2012) cites: decisiveness, integrity, communication, professional knowledge, humility, a capacity for innovation, vision or aspiration, and the ability to develop teams.

<sup>48</sup> Kolditz (2005, p. 10) puts a strong emphasis on: inherent learning and motivation, a willingness to share risks, and elements of a common lifestyle. Kolditz suggests that competence, trust, and loyalty are most likely also important. Karrasch, Levine & Kolditz (2011) further support this list.

<sup>49</sup> Yukl and Van Fleet (1982, p. 87) assert “behaviours that are important for group performance in both combat and non-combat situations include performance emphasis, inspiration, role-clarification, and criticism-discipline.” Planning and problem solving are important in dynamic (combat situations) and “consideration is important for maintaining effective subordinate-leader relations.”

<sup>50</sup> The US DoD (2006, p. 2-4) asserts that there are three main key leader attributes (character, presence, and intellectual capacity) and three main leader behaviours (leading, developing, achieving). The UK Ministry of Defence (2004, p. 23, 2011b, pp. 4–10) relies on Benest’s seven skills and behaviours (discussed above) but also mentions other skills and behaviours including example, persuasion, judgement, courage, etc.. The Australian DoD (2010) provides a detailed framework of leadership skills that include five capability areas: results, relationships, strategic thinking, communication, and personal drive & integrity.

<sup>51</sup> Kouzes and Posner (1989, 1995, 2008, 2010a, pp. 14–23, 2010b) have many publications citing five basic behaviours: modelling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging processes, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart.

<sup>52</sup> The 10 lists cited by Judge, Ilies, Bono, & Gerhardt (2002, p. 766, *Table 1*) each cite 4-10 varying skills and behaviours. Some behaviours, such as integrity and self-confidence, appear in multiple lists; others, such as “urgency” and “dominance”, were suggested only in singular studies.

<sup>53</sup> (Bass, 2008, *Chapter 5*)

followers and satisfy [the follower's] higher needs.”<sup>54</sup> Like research conducted on military organizations, commercial leadership research has not established that any particular leadership skills or behaviours are universally required.

Extant literature regarding leadership in the context of PSCs is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two: *Review of Literature*; however very little research focusing on PSCs was found. The literature review discovered that, currently, most of what we can assume about leadership in PSCs research is extrapolated from studies that have been conducted on military or other commercial organizations. This thesis asserts that bespoke research to determine which leadership factors are most influential in PSCs is necessary to strengthen existing leadership theories and provide more evidence of PSCs' capacities for ethical behaviour.

The following chart summarizes current approaches to debates regarding PSCs and leadership and the new approach that this thesis contributes:

Summary of this Thesis's Contributions to Existing Debates				
	Existing Debates	Prominent Approach to the Debate	This Thesis's New Approach to the Debate	References for Existing Debates
PSC Research	How to ensure the ethical behaviour of PSCs?	Analyse ways to implement, monitor, and enforce regulations	Analyse the impact of leadership on ethical behaviour within PSCs <sup>55</sup>	(Bosch, 2007; Cameron, 2007; Chesterman & Lehnardt, 2007a; DFAE, 2008; Dumlupinar, 2010; Foreign Commonwealth Office, 2002; Francioni, 2008; Holmqvist, 2005; ICRC, 2010; Kinsey, 2005a, 2006; Krahmann, 2003, 2005b, 2012; Maogoto & Sheehy, 2006; McNaylor, 2010; Nossal, 2001; Singer, 2001)
Leadership Research	To what extent does leadership influence ethical behaviour?	Analyse the impact of leadership in military or commercial organizations		(Deshpande, Joseph, & Prasad, 2008; Dukerich, Nichols, Elm, & Vollrath, 1990a, p. 487; Ethics Resource Center, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011; Petrick & Quinn, 2001; Tepper, 2000, p. 186; Treviño, Butterfield, & McCabe, 1998, p. 471; Treviño, Weaver, & Reynolds, 2006, p. 955)

A final contribution of this thesis stems from the attention it gives to British PSCs. It is defensible to argue that, despite Britain's early entrance into the private security industry,<sup>56</sup> literature appears to focus on US-based PSCs. Information specific to the British private security industry appears to be more limited than information available regarding the US or

<sup>54</sup> Burns (2010, p. 4, *Prologue*) attempts to avoid focusing on specific skills or behaviours, preferring to say that leaders must simply be “transformational.”

<sup>55</sup> PSCs have characteristics of both military and commercial organizations making them a unique “hybrid” (Berndtsson, 2012, p. 305; Carmola, 2010, p. 28). PSCs also have characteristics of NGOs but because leadership research focuses on military and commercial organizations, this research will focus on the military and commercial characteristics of PSCs. This research's review of literature found no research exploring the impact of leadership within PSCs.

<sup>56</sup> Watchguard International, established in 1967, is considered to be the first contemporary private military and security company (Dunigan, 2011, p. 2; Kinsey, 2006, p. 46; Spicer, 2004, p. 40).

the global industry, ostensibly because the British PSC industry is smaller than that of the US and because the UK government has enacted fewer regulations regarding PSCs. Given different histories, regulatory environments, and social contexts, it cannot be assumed that what is true for US or other nations' PSCs is necessarily true for British PSCs.

Assumptions that the ethical challenges faced by British PSCs are similar to those challenges faced by US and other nations' PSCs are not completely without merit. The wide range of operating environments, nationalities of PSCs, and timeframes related to publicized incidences of different types of PSC misconduct (discussed in the opening paragraphs of the *Introduction*) and the international context in which the ICoC and related documents are couched suggest that concerns about undesired violence and corrupt business practices are fairly uniform throughout the global private security industry. Because British PSCs operate in the same global market and subscribe to the same rules, standards, codes, and principles as other PSCs, it is reasonable to assume that British PSCs face the same ethical challenges. Additionally, analyses of interviews (discussed in the Chapter Four section entitled *Participant Demographics*) show that labour mobility within the sample population was high. Research participants were able to discuss ethical problems citing British and international PSCs almost equally.

However, the above observations above do not equate to indisputable proof that British and other PSCs face the same ethical challenges to equal extents. Insufficient research has been conducted to know if British and other PSCs are inherently, differently able to meet ethical challenges.<sup>57</sup> The research underlying this thesis did not gather sufficient data to make a comparison of British and other nations' PSCs possible, nor was that a goal of the research. Importantly, the fact that this thesis's small sample population is made up entirely from British PSCs means that the thesis's findings are best applied only to the British private security industry. Additional research would be necessary to determine whether any one British PSCs was more or less ethical than other British PSCs; or whether British PSCs as a group are more or less ethical than PSCs from other countries.

The relatively reduced amount of literature available on British PSCs combined with the limited resources inherent to PhD research encouraged this thesis to narrow its focus to British PSCs.<sup>58</sup> The benefits of this narrowed focus and further significance of this research

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<sup>57</sup> Higate (2012a) found that at least some British PSC personnel view US PSC personnel as "less-competent." However, this research is insufficient to prove that measurable competency gaps exist in reality; or that British PSC personnel face different ethical challenges or are inherently more able to meet ethical challenges.

<sup>58</sup> The researcher's personal experiences within the British private security industry had a practical impact on the feasibility and conduct of the research underlying this thesis. The impact of the researcher's personal

are that more information can be added to the body of knowledge regarding British PSCs, analyses can be confined to a more-manageable amount of information, and this study may serve as a good precursor to future comparative studies involving the larger US or global private security industry.

### Purpose of this Thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to identify and analyse the impact of leadership on the ethical behaviour of British PSCs. To achieve this purpose, this thesis examines research that employed a constructivist grounded theory (GT) methodology.<sup>59</sup> Original data was gathered via semi-structured interviews and then analyzed using the constant comparative method and theoretical integration. The result of these analyses was the discovery of new information that helps to explain the drivers of ethical behaviour amongst British PSC personnel operating in hostile environments. New information was also discovered that helps to explain how, why, and to what extent leadership skills and behaviours can impact on those drivers.

After identifying and analysing the impact of leadership on the ethical behaviour of PSCs, this thesis discusses the implications of its findings as they pertain to two of civil society's apparently prominent concerns. The findings of this thesis are used to inform debates about whether financial motivations negatively affect the ethical capacities of PSCs and PSC personnel; and the findings of this thesis are used to usefully inform international regulatory efforts and government policy efforts.

It is important to note that it is not this thesis's purpose to determine PSC leaders' individual interpretations of ethics and/or the rules, standards, codes, and principles intended to frame ethical behaviour. Such research could be valuable because people's individual interpretations might influence their behaviour.<sup>60</sup> However, rules such as the RUF or ROE, industry standards such as PSC.1, codes of conduct including the ICoC, and principles such as those outlined in the Geneva Convention can all change depending on time, environments, contexts, and the combatant status of individuals. As suggested in the section above entitled *Ensuring the Ethical Behaviour of Private Security Companies*, the British (and international) private security industry is rapidly evolving. To help narrow the focus this thesis and to help

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experiences is discussed in detail in the section entitled *Reflexivity in the Research Design, Procedures, and Findings* in Chapter Three: *Methodology*.

<sup>59</sup> (Charmaz, 2006)

<sup>60</sup> Given the number of national, religious, gender, age, education, employment, and personality-based variables that can influence a person's understanding of ethics in various circumstances, such research would also be complex enough that it could merit a PhD in its own right. See the section entitled *Defining Ethical Behaviour* in Chapter Two: *Review of Literature* for further details.

ensure that the findings of this thesis remain relevant over time, a single, static definition of “ethical behaviour” was selected and used as a constant.<sup>61</sup> This thesis’s central and sub-questions were subsequently structured to determine *how* and *to what extent* leaders can leverage their leadership skills and behaviour to influence others to comply with whichever rules, standards, codes, and principles leaders have prescribed from the top down.

## Thesis Question

A broad central question guides the research underlying this thesis:

“To what extent do leadership skills and behaviours influence the ethical behaviour of British PSC personnel in hostile environments?”

Throughout this thesis, two foci are kept. The first focus is on leadership skills and behaviours because these are the two principal aspects of leadership being used to develop new understandings of PSCs. Other aspects of leadership, such as traits, are marginalized at the outset to narrow the scope of this thesis such that it could be completed within a four year period. The second focus is on ethical behaviour to ensure that this thesis generates new information to contribute to existing debates on how to ensure the ethical behaviour of PSCs.

Key terms comprising the central thesis question were defined by the literature and functioned to narrow the scope of the thesis so that the project was achievable within a four year period. The following chart depicts ways in which the central thesis question delineated and narrowed the scope of this thesis:

<b>Delineations Inherent to the Central Thesis Question:</b>	
<b>This thesis will focus on:</b>	<b>This thesis will avoid addressing:</b>
Leadership skills and behaviours	Leadership traits
Perceptions of PSC leaders	Positivist interpretations of data
Debates about how leaders can influence the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel	Other debates such as those arguing which behaviour is (or is not) ethical; or, how PSCs fit with theories on States’ monopolies on violence or social contracts
British PSCs only	PSCs founded in the United States or other countries
Private Security Companies (PSCs) only	Private Military Companies (PMCs) and unarmed military and security service providers
Operations in hostile environments where security personnel must be armed to fulfil their duties	Operations in locations where security personnel are unarmed without the possibility of using lethal force

<sup>61</sup> This thesis defines ethical behaviour as: “adhering to rules, standards, codes, or principles that provide guidelines for morally right behaviour and integrity in specific situations” (Lewis, 1985, p. 381). See the section entitled *Defining Ethical Behaviour* in Chapter Two: *Review of Literature* for further details.

Several sub-questions were developed to ensure that the central thesis question could be answered in sufficient detail to achieve the purpose of this study. To ensure that data was comprehensive, each sub-question was explored at four levels of decision-making authority within PSCs: (1) corporate level, (2) regional & country level, and (3) project level, and (4) team leader & supervisor level. This quad-levelled division was suitable for both PSCs organized as “divisionalised PSCs” and PSCs organized as “loosely coupled organic networks.”<sup>62</sup> The sub-questions guiding this study were:

- 1) What are the drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments?
- 2) Which leadership skills and behaviours affect those drivers of ethical behaviour?
- 3) What is the magnitude of leadership’s impact on the drivers of ethical behaviour?

### Significance of this Thesis to Research

The significance of this thesis to research is that, by improving our understanding of the impact of leadership on ethical behaviour within PSCs, it becomes possible to advance existing debates about the PSC industry beyond current approaches. This thesis helps to identify the key drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments and exactly which leadership skills and behaviours affect those drivers. It also contributes to an understanding of the magnitude of the impact of leadership on those drivers.

Improving our understanding of the impact of leadership within PSCs begins firstly with identifying the key drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments. An understanding of the key drivers of ethical behaviour includes understanding how leaders rank ethics amongst other priorities. Although researchers have already examined ethical behaviours<sup>63</sup> and other measures of organizational effectiveness<sup>64</sup> within PSCs, only minimal attention has been given to how PSC leaders rank these themes in terms of priority.<sup>65</sup> Profitability, for example, is an internal measure of organizational effectiveness that is a

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<sup>62</sup> Kinsey (2005b, pp. 193, 196) identifies two distinct organizational structures for PSCs. Neither structure appears to be inherently more effective or ethical.

<sup>63</sup> Studies addressing the ethical behaviours, values, and beliefs of PSC personnel include: (Carmola, 2010, Ch. 5; Franke & Schaub, 2009; Franke & Von Boemcken, 2011); “Scholars have identified and researched possible ethical dilemmas that can arise because of the phenomena of private security[;] less attention is being paid to the actual value orientations and ethical assumptions inside the private security sector” (Van Buuren, 2009, p. 49).

<sup>64</sup> See Footnote 119 for a more detailed list of studies examining aspects of PSC organizational effectiveness

<sup>65</sup> Franke and Von Boemcken (2011, p. 732) ranked seven contractor values and attributes; however, their sample was made up of contractors from law enforcement backgrounds. Franke and Schaub (2009, p. 96) also use a law enforcement sample population to represent PSC personnel. The majority of PSC personnel have military backgrounds, thus limiting the representativeness of these studies. This thesis addresses contractor values using a more-representative sample population comprised of contractors with military backgrounds.

known priority (value) for commercial organizations like PSCs.<sup>66</sup> But PSCs hire many leaders whose values and personalities have been influenced by military indoctrination programs. While it might be reasonable to assume that profitability is a priority for PSC leaders, it cannot be assumed that profitability is every PSC leaders' highest priority. This thesis is significant because it helps us to understand the drivers of ethical behaviour and how ethics, compared to other priorities, informs PSC leaders' behaviour. The results of this thesis can be used to help inform debates about how to best ensure the ethical behaviour of PSCs in hostile environments. This thesis allows existing debates about ensuring the ethical behaviour of PSCs to move beyond regulation and financial or legal sources of motivation and to include other social and psychological drivers associated with leadership.

Understanding the impact of leadership within PSCs additionally includes identifying exactly which leadership skills and behaviours affect the drivers of ethical behaviour. Although studies have suggested lists of skills and behaviours that are necessary for effective leadership most of the time, research has not yet established the relative importance of specific leadership skills and behaviours. Whether any particular leadership skills or behaviours are universally necessary for effective leadership in any particular type of organization, including PSCs, is unconfirmed.<sup>67</sup> This thesis adds a list of effective leadership skills and behaviours to the body of knowledge that is specific to PSCs. This contribution is significant in that this list may be used to further inform existing skill, behavioural and multi-dimensional leadership theories.

Developing a better understanding of the impact of leadership within PSCs also includes identifying the magnitude of the impact of leadership on the drivers of ethical behaviour. It is already known that leadership has some impact within organizations: Longitudinal studies conducted by the Ethics Resource Center (ERC) have consistently found that individual and collective leadership skills and behaviours influence the ethical decisions and behaviour of subordinates.<sup>68</sup> It is also known that leader behaviours can directly influence organizational

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<sup>66</sup> Yukl (2008, p. 709) defines organizational effectiveness as "the extent to which it is able to survive, perform its mission, and maintain favourable earnings, financial resources, and asset value." This definition is compatible with Martz's (2008, p. 178, *Table 1*) research which identifies measures (including profitability) for evaluating organizational effectiveness.

<sup>67</sup> Numerous lists have been published of effective leadership skills and behaviours specific to the context of commercial (Bass, 2008, *Ch. 5*; Judge et al., 2002, p. 766, *Table 1*; Kouzes & Posner, 2010b) and military environments (Benest, 2007, p. 11, 2012; UK Ministry of Defence, 2004, p. 23; Yukl & Van Fleet, 1982, p. 100). However these lists do not match up to each other in large part due to the researchers' understandings of the definition of leadership.

<sup>68</sup> (Ethics Resource Center, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011)



effectiveness.<sup>69</sup> That leadership has some degree of influence within organizations is not in doubt; however, studies on the “flow” of ethical behaviours throughout organizations have discovered limits to how ethical behaviour can be disseminated and enforced.<sup>70</sup> This thesis contributes to understandings of the ‘flow’ of ethical behaviours in PSCs.

This thesis is additionally significant because it provides useful insights into the perceptions of PSC leaders. The questions posed by this thesis help to determine if PSC leaders perceive their own skills and behaviour to be of significant importance such that they feel empowered to leverage leadership during times of crisis. Psychological empowerment is one end-result of ethical leadership behaviour. The discovery of “empowered” middle and lower-level leaders within a PSC could be an indicator of ethical leadership taking place at higher levels.<sup>71</sup> This thesis also helps determine if there is a correlation between a leader’s position in a PSC’s hierarchy and a leader’s perception of the importance of leadership. Virtual project environments (including those of PSCs) often give leaders a greater sense of empowerment because there is no other option but to delegate tasks.<sup>72</sup> Delegating tasks leads to a sense of empowerment and a climate of empowerment facilitates effective leadership. This suggests that distant corporate-level leaders in PSCs might feel suitably empowered to leverage their leadership during times of crisis, however contextual differences (including leaders’ perceptions of what constitutes a “crisis”) prevent us from knowing with more certainty without further inquiry. Determining how PSC leaders at different levels of decision-making authority understand and perceive the impact of their own leadership can help inform the way that authorities should seek to influence ethical and operational decision making within PSCs. This thesis’s findings could, for example, indicate a need for more or less emphasis to be placed on empowering PSC leaders at specific levels in PSC hierarchies.

While some existing leadership research may be applicable to PSCs, findings based on any one type of organization often do not account for variables unique to other types of organizations.<sup>73</sup> Research on *in extremis* leadership is exceptional in that it often spans the

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<sup>69</sup> (Bohn, 2002; Ogbonna & Harris, 2000, p. 766; Right Management, 2010, pp. 9–11)

<sup>70</sup> (Mayer, Kuenzi, Greenbaum, Bardes, & Salvador, 2009); “ethical behaviour” is discussed and defined in Chapter Two: *Review of Literature*

<sup>71</sup> (Zhu, May, & Avolio, 2004, p. 20)

<sup>72</sup> (Nauman, Mansur Khan, & Ehsan, 2010, p. 644)

<sup>73</sup> Within the contexts of individual industries and militaries, critical leader behaviours “are reasonably similar.” But across contexts, major differences appear: “critical leader behaviours” within industries are not the same as those within militaries (Van Fleet, 1976, pp. 31, 34–35). With such variance between organizational contexts, it is reasonable to hypothesize that the critical leader behaviours for PSCs are also unique.

gap between military and civilian organizations.<sup>74</sup> However there is still room for contribution in that PSCs represent a third type of organization: one with a combination of military and civilian characteristics. As of the writing of this thesis, no major leadership studies from either the US or the UK have examined leadership in the context of PSCs.

### Limitations of the Research Underlying this Thesis

The limitations of the research underlying this thesis stem primarily from a limited availability of information specific to the British PSC industry. Isolating data and statistics specific to PSCs is often difficult or impossible because of disagreements over the definition of a PSC.<sup>75</sup> It is difficult to categorize private security service providers because many Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs) change their service offerings or provide multiple types of services. Isolating data specific to British PSCs can be even more challenging because the British PSC industry is smaller than the US industry. The UK government has also enacted fewer regulations regarding PSCs; thus, limiting the amount of information on PSCs written from a British perspective. This thesis used literature judiciously to avoid over-extrapolating or drawing weak inferences. Literature regarding PSCs in other countries including South Africa, Australia, and Israel was available but, like US literature, it was grounded in a different cultural and/or political context than that of the UK. This thesis therefore relied heavily on data collected via interviews with British PSC members to fill gaps in the literature.

Additionally, some methodological limitations inherent to social and grounded theory (GT) research impact upon this thesis. The research underlying this thesis adhered to Charmaz's constructivist GT methodology, discussed in detail in Chapter Three, to maximize the validity of its findings.<sup>76</sup> Methodological limitations include language barriers, preconceptions in coding, transcribing errors, and critical concerns over the use of purposive, non-probability sampling as the primary means of data collection. The sample population for the research was made up of volunteers and therefore an unknown percentage of the total population has been necessarily excluded. Finally, the conclusions derived from the research

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<sup>74</sup> Kolditz, a leading researcher and publisher on *in extremis* leadership, has a military background but pointedly includes civilian organizations in his sample populations (Karrasch et al., 2011, p. 218; Kolditz, 2005, p. 7).

<sup>75</sup> These disagreements are explained in detail in Chapter Two: *Review of Literature*

<sup>76</sup> (Charmaz, 2006)

are, in many cases, applicable only to the research sample population.<sup>77</sup> Most GT research sampling, including the sampling done for this research, is conducted for diversity rather than representativeness. Because of this, this thesis shows only the range of effective leadership skills and behaviours. The specific skills and behaviours on the list cannot be effectively rank-ordered without conducting further research. Methodologically-based limitations are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three: *Methodology*, along with control measures that were able to at least partially mitigate principal concerns. In the final analyses, most limitations of the research serve only to narrow the applicability of the findings thus enabling this thesis to still provide valuable insight into the subject of leadership and ethics in the British private security industry.

## Summary

To explore the extent to which leadership skills and behaviours can influence the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel, this thesis seeks to identify key components of leadership within PSCs. Both leadership and ethical behaviour are phenomena rooted in the fields of psychology and sociology. The definitions of leadership and ethical behaviour have also been determined to be arguable concepts, subject to interpretation, and thus best studied through an interpretivist framework. Because no existing research was found on the subject of ‘leadership’s impact on ethical behaviour within PSCs’ and because PSCs have a unique combination of characteristics inherent to both military and commercial organizations, this thesis chooses not to rely on existing leadership theories to explain the impact of leadership within PSCs. Grounded theory is a methodological framework that does not depend on existing theories. GT is therefore a suitable methodology for discovering new information on the subject. Constructivist GT was selected as the specific, most suitable type of GT research due to the researchers’ own experiences within the British private security industry. While GT research is normally designed to create new theory rather than to apply or test existing theories, resource limitations made it reasonable to limit the goals of this thesis to simply providing new information that could be useful for the future development of a theory.

Having identified the topic to be explored, the canons of GT research require that a review of literature be conducted to increase ‘theoretical sensitivity.’ Chapter Two consists of a literature review that led to definitions for leadership, ethical behaviour, and PSCs that

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<sup>77</sup> The findings of grounded theory research conducted at the substantive level cannot be generalized; “[findings] are applicable only to the substantive setting from which they are derived” (Parry, 1998a, p. 92).

are suitable for the purposes of this thesis. Leadership is defined in this thesis as “the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to achieve a common goal.” Ethical behaviour is defined as “adhering to rules, standards, codes, or principles that provide guidelines for morally right behaviour and integrity in specific situations.” PSCs are defined as “companies that provide armed defensive services to protect individuals and property.” The review of literature determined that regulation is the predominant means by which stakeholders are attempting to influence the behaviour of PSC personnel, but that there is evidence to suggest that leadership skills and behaviours could, in fact, be more influential. A basic understanding of existing efforts to control PSCs and of leadership within PSCs is developed in Chapter Two, but not to the extent that preconceived notions are likely to influence the outcome of the research.

Chapter Three explains the decision-making process that led to the selection of constructivist GT as the methodological framework. Chapter Three also outlines the specific steps that were taken to gather and analyse data. A data collection instrument called a ‘semi-structured interview guide’ was created and used to collect data. GT coding processes called the ‘constant comparative method’ and ‘theoretical integration’ were used to analyse data. A discussion of the validity and reliability of the instrument and coding process includes steps to help mitigate weaknesses and potential pitfalls inherent to each. Enough detail is given that this study could be replicated by future researchers, notwithstanding difficulties inherent to replicating social research.

Chapter Four presents the findings of this thesis’s research, addressing the results of each of the coding phases in sequence. A conscious decision has been made to present data gleaned from the coding process in Chapter Four before moving on to a detailed discussion of the interview findings in Chapter Five. This decision stems from critical concerns about the validity and reliability of knowledge gleaned from subjective coding processes. Separating the presentation of the data from the explanation of the analyses maximizes transparency: the separation allows readers to follow each step of the coding process. The description of the findings of this thesis’s research includes a discussion of the participants that were found. The participant selection process led to 24 PSC leaders who were able to describe first-hand experiences within at least 15 separate British PSCs. An underlying assumption that labour mobility within the industry is sufficient to allow a small sample size to yield a sufficient amount of data is at least partially verified through multiple regression statistics. The initial coding phase discovered four important *in vivo* codes and numerous initial codes which are further distilled in the focused coding phase. The focused coding phase discovered 131

focused codes, which are listed along with frequency data regarding their sources and references. Finally, the theoretical coding phase resulted in five central themes that can be explained by way of a written narrative in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five consists of a detailed examination of the five central themes that resulted from the coding conducted in Chapter Four. Chapter Five uses these themes to address the three sub-questions that were developed at the start of the thesis to ensure that a robust answer can be given to the central thesis question. The three sub-questions and the findings of this thesis can be summarized as:

- 1) What are the drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments?
  - a. Driver #1: PSC personnel's understandings of security in the commercial context
  - b. Driver #2: All leaders' understandings of their personal roles in establishing an organization-wide ethical climate
  - c. Driver #3: PSC personnel's personal motivations to fulfil the responsibilities inherent to their roles.
- 2) Which leadership skills and behaviours affect the three drivers of ethical behaviour?
  - a. Leadership skills that facilitate:
    - i. Culturally-aware personnel management
    - ii. Policy writing
    - iii. Empathetic personnel management, with an emphasis on the selection of fair and effective disciplinary systems
    - iv. Client management, with an emphasis on clear communication to help manage client expectations
  - b. Leadership behaviours that demonstrate leaders' willingness to:
    - i. Communicate openly and honestly
    - ii. Emphasize teamwork and collaboration
    - iii. Train personnel
    - iv. Exercise a duty of care over personnel
    - v. Vet personnel
    - vi. Establish top-down enforcement mechanisms
    - vii. Allocate adequate resources to allow subordinates to perform tasks in ethical ways.
- 3) What is the magnitude of leadership's impact on the drivers of ethical behaviour?
  - a. Leadership skills and behaviours have some impact on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. The amount of impact cannot be determined by this thesis; however, it appears that leaders have been able to change and, in some cases, decrease the number of ethical challenges that they and their personnel face.
  - b. Leadership behaviours appear to have more impact on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel than written rules, regulations, and policies. Specific behaviours that exemplify ethical standards to clients, PSC personnel, and other stakeholders include:
    - i. Modelling behavioural standards
    - ii. Treating others honestly and fairly
    - iii. Discussing ethical values as priorities
    - iv. Spending resources to supervise and enforce ethical norms.

Chapter Six examines empirical evidence originating from outside of the private security industry in an attempt to corroborate the findings of the research underlying this thesis through information triangulation. No sources of information were found that directly pertained to influential leadership skills and behaviours within the private security industry. However, several sources indirectly suggested that both client and PSC leaders are capable of influencing PSC personnel if they leverage certain skills and take certain actions. The empirical evidence reviewed in this chapter includes research examining the mental health and welfare of private security contractors, academic reports and government documents examining the oversight of PSCs in Iraq, and reports written for NGOs and humanitarian aid organizations. The examination of these documents appears to support three out of the four leadership skills and all seven of the leadership behaviours identified in this thesis as being important. The chapter concludes with a discussion of why bespoke information on this subject might be scarce and how future research might provide more reliable information to support or challenge the assertions of this thesis.

Chapter Seven discusses the implications of this thesis's findings as they pertain to prominent concerns about civil society's ability to control the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. Several of the findings of this thesis directly contribute new information to debates over whether the commercial interests of PSCs hinder their abilities to fulfil contractual obligations and to adhere to the ethical norms underpinning IHLs whilst performing missions in hostile environments. This thesis also contributes new information to help inform debates about whether market pressures incentivize PSCs to perform to the lowest ethical standards that legal codes allow. Finally, Chapter Seven addresses the implications of this research as they pertain to international efforts and government policies designed to control and use PSCs. This chapter critiques the usefulness of an auditable list of ISO 9001 standards entitled "PSC.1" and it clarifies the limits to which regulations can influence the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. This thesis's findings suggest that previous discussions about civil society's ability to control the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel have not been fully informed. Financial and legal factors may influence contractors' behaviour; however, leaders can leverage certain leadership skills and behaviours to mitigate at least some of civil society's concerns to some extent.

Finally, Chapter Eight summarizes the contributions of each chapter of this thesis. Chapter Eight also makes several recommendations for additional research that might further

improve our understanding of the impact of leadership on the ethical behaviour of British (and worldwide) private security personnel.

## Chapter Two: Review of Literature

This literature review first examines the descriptive works of early researchers in order to establish the definitional parameters and scope of this thesis. Definitions for “leadership,” “ethical behaviour,” and “Private Security Companies” are synthesized. This review then examines the principal debates regarding the private military and security industry, ultimately narrowing its focus to “civil society’s ability to control PSCs.” Key debates concerning the control of PSCs are dissected into two principal questions; namely: can PSCs be effectively controlled? And, to what extent is leadership an effective organizational control mechanism? Finally, this review examines the perspectives and theories of primary authors who have addressed the control of PSCs. It then determines where existing theories have stopped short of forming a comprehensive argument.<sup>78</sup>

This literature review is structured thematically. Source materials include peer-reviewed journals, the publications of academics, practitioners, governments, and NGOs, historical documents, and the comprehensive reviews of other researchers.

### Defining Key Terms

To assume that all terms have inherent meanings would be to commit the “fallacy of essentialism”: the assumption that a “true” or essential meaning exists for a particular term. Terms must be individually identified and explicated for meaning to be assured.<sup>79</sup> The meanings of the terms ‘leadership,’ ‘ethics,’ and ‘private security companies’ are particularly debated. Therefore, this section reviews disparate definitions for these terms to establish singular, clear definitions that are supported by the literature and suitable for the purposes of this study.

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<sup>78</sup> In accordance with the canons of Grounded Theory (GT) research, this literature review contains only enough detail to develop ‘sensitizing concepts’ (Cutcliffe, 2000, p. 1480). Sensitizing concepts are “interpretive devices” or “starting point[s] for a qualitative study... [they] draw attention to important features of social interaction and provide guidelines for research in specific settings” (Glen A. Bowen, 2008, p. 14). “Whereas definitive concepts provide prescriptions of what to see, sensitizing concepts merely suggest directions along which to look” (Blumer, 1954, p. 7). More information about GT can be found in *Chapter 3: Methodology*

<sup>79</sup> (Ritzer, 2005, p. 382)



## Defining “Leadership”

Stogdill famously quoted, “there are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are people who have tried to define it;”<sup>80</sup> however, most theorists seem to agree that the number of key concepts integral to the phenomenon of leadership is finite: (a) “leadership involves influence, (b) leadership occurs in a group context, and (c) leadership involves goal attainment.” Northouse additionally asserts that a central component of the phenomenon of leadership is that “leadership is a process.” Although this assertion is debatable, one positive aspect of defining leadership as a process is that “when leadership is defined in this manner, it becomes available to everyone.” Viewing leadership as an inborn trait denies “the value of teaching and leadership training.”<sup>81</sup> This thesis accepts that leadership as a teachable skill in an effort to ensure the utility of its findings. Illustrating general agreement, many researchers have developed similar definitions of leadership:

Leadership is...	Involves Influence	Group Context	Goal Attainment	Is a process
“a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2010, p. 3, 2012, p. 6)	X	X	X	X
“an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a structuring or restructuring of the situation and of the perceptions and expectations of the members” (Bass, 2008, p. 25)		X	X	X
“showing the way and helping or inducing others to pursue it” (Gill, 2011a, p. 9) <sup>82</sup>	X	X	X	
“the process of influencing the activities in an organized group in its efforts towards goal setting and goal achievement” (Stogdill, 1974, p. 3)	X	X	X	X
“an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes” (Rost, 1993a, p. 99)	X	X	X	
“leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and motivations –the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations – <i>of both leaders and followers</i> (Burns, 2010, p. 19)	X	X	X	
“the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and improve the organization” (US Government, 2007b, p. 1)	X	X	X	X
“the projection of personality and purpose to influence subordinates to prevail in the most demanding circumstances” (UK Ministry of Defence, 2011b, para. 4-10)	X	X	X	

<sup>80</sup> Stogdill’s quote (1974, p. 7) could be disputed by Rost (1993a, p. 44) who cites 221 definitions of leadership within 587 works published between 1900 and 1989. Bass (2008, p. 25) emphasizes the importance of understanding researchers’ different conceptions of leadership stating, “Until an ‘academy of leadership’ establishes an accepted standard definition [of leadership], we must... [make] sure we understand which [definition] is being used in any particular analysis.”

<sup>81</sup> (Northouse, 2010, pp. 3, 27)

<sup>82</sup> Gill (2011a, p. 9) distinguishes between “induce” and “influence,” stating that the definition of “induce” encompasses several meanings including the act of influencing.

For the purpose of this thesis, leadership is defined as: “the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to achieve a common goal.” This definition is most similar to the definitions of leadership given by Northouse, Stogdill, and the US government. However, it also contains key elements of leadership (influence, group context, goal attainment, process) identified by Bass, Gill, Rost, and Burns. It is also essential for the purpose of this thesis to understand three major theoretical perspectives that explain leadership as a set of attributes, styles, and multi-dimensional processes. Attributional theories perceive leadership as a set of *traits*<sup>83</sup> or *skills*<sup>84</sup> that enable leaders to influence others. The common characteristic of theories in the attributional category is that leadership is intrinsic to the leader. Trait theory asserts that leaders are born with traits conducive to effective leadership. Skills theory asserts that learned capabilities, knowledge, and skills enable leaders to make use of whatever genetic advantages they might have.<sup>85</sup> The value of treating leadership as a learnable skill is that “leadership [then] becomes available to everybody.”<sup>86</sup> Style theories perceive leadership as *observable behaviours*: the “actions of leaders towards subordinates in various contexts.”<sup>87</sup> Gill describes the style perspective as the study of “what effective leaders *do*.”<sup>88</sup> The style perspective does not dismiss the importance of attributes entirely, but it offers a new, more heuristic, framework for conceptualizing leadership.<sup>89</sup> Finally, multi-dimensional theories perceive leadership as a *process* that occurs “when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group.”<sup>90</sup> By focusing on the process, rather than on protagonists, this perspective permits the consideration of many variables beyond who the leader is and what the leader does. As a result, the multi-dimensional perspective encompasses the most complex and the greatest number of leadership theories.<sup>91</sup> Understanding these three perspectives makes it possible to locate this thesis’s place in the existing literature and to pointedly discuss leadership skills and behaviours.

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<sup>83</sup> (Bass, 2008, p. 107, CH4 & CH5; Bryman, 1992, p. 1; Gill, 2011a, p. 63; Van Seters & Field, 1990, p. 30)

<sup>84</sup> (Katz, 1955; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; M. D. Mumford, Zaccaro, Connelly, & Marks, 2000)

<sup>85</sup> (M. D. Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Jacobs, & Fleishman, 2000, p. 12)

<sup>86</sup> (Northouse, 2010, p. 54)

<sup>87</sup> (Northouse, 2010, p. 69)

<sup>88</sup> (Gill, 2011a, p. 71)

<sup>89</sup> (Northouse, 2010, p. 78)

<sup>90</sup> (Bass, 2008, p. 25)

<sup>91</sup> Multi-dimensional leadership theories include transactional-transformational (Burns, 2010, p. 19); Contingency (Fiedler, 1964, 1967); Path-Goal (R. J. House, 1996, p. 324); and LMX (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991, p. 33; Northouse, 2010, p. 152) theories.

Relying on this definition of leadership facilitates certain analyses and inhibits others. Accepting leadership as a process enables this thesis to discuss the interactions between leaders and followers, as opposed to limiting discussions to individual leaders' skills and behaviours. Accepting leadership as a process is also a key component of analyzing *the extent to which* leadership skills and behaviours influence the ethical behaviour of British PSC personnel in hostile environments. As interactions between leaders and followers vary, specific leadership skills and behaviours may have varying degrees of influence on ethical behaviour. By defining "purpose, direction, and motivation" as specific indicators of influence, this thesis sets up three criteria for observing influence. Other forms of influence will not be discussed or measured in detail. Furthermore, this thesis's definition of leadership implies a group context by pluralizing "people" but it does not restrict analyses to formally-designated leaders or protagonists. Finally, 'goal achievement' is defined as the driving force behind leadership. The achievement of (or failure to achieve) a common goal can be used as a basis of measure for effective leadership.

#### Defining "Ethical Behaviour"

Definitions of "ethical behaviour" are diverse because perceptions of 'ethics' are based on a diverse array of individual and situational (contextual) variables. Variables related to individuals include "nationality, religion, sex, age, education, employment, and personality." Situation-specific variables include "referent groups, rewards and sanctions, codes of conduct, type of ethical conflict, organization effects, industry, and business competitiveness."<sup>92</sup> In business ethics, "business size" is also a key variable.<sup>93</sup> Treviño and Weaver further discuss variables related to normative and empirical approaches.<sup>94</sup>

Further complicating matters, many evaluative publications addressing ethical behaviour choose not to define 'ethics' at all, assuming instead that universal or user-defined definitions are sufficient for discussing ethical decision making processes. Lewis's meta-analysis found that only 31% of business textbooks that addressed ethics made an attempt to define business ethics. Most authors did not distinguish between business ethics and 'universal' ethics.<sup>95</sup> Prominent post-1985 'ethics' authors, have generally evaluated business ethics according to "whether practices...can be considered morally acceptable"; however, 'moral acceptability'

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<sup>92</sup> (Ford & Richardson, 1994, p. 205) Much of the work reviewed by Ford & Richardson has been more recently verified by the ERC.

<sup>93</sup> (Vyakarnam, Bailey, Myers, & Burnett, 1997, p. 1635)

<sup>94</sup> (Treviño & Weaver, 1994)

<sup>95</sup> (Lewis, 1985, p. 379)

remains a fluid concept.<sup>96</sup> Amongst publications that do establish definitions, certain themes reoccur such that a general definition for ethics, suitable for the purposes of this thesis, could be selected.

This thesis defines ethical behaviour as: “adhering to rules, standards, codes, or principles that provide guidelines for morally right behaviour and integrity in specific situations.” This definition is adapted from Lewis’s definition of “business ethics.”<sup>97</sup> A more recent review of behavioural ethics in organizations by Treviño et al. challenged several assumptions about the cognitive nature of ethical decision making and about leaders’ abilities to impact on subordinates’ ethical decision-making processes.<sup>98</sup> It did not, however, reveal any major new categories beyond the original four categories comprising Lewis’s definition, suggesting that Lewis’s historical definition remains valid today.<sup>99</sup> To avoid tangential philosophical debates over the objective and subjective nature of “truth,” this thesis uses the term “integrity” in place of Lewis’s term “truthfulness.” “Integrity” is defined in accordance with the ERC’s definition of ethical leadership behaviour: integrity is “keeping promises and keeping employees informed.”<sup>100</sup> When defined as such, behaving with “integrity” becomes similar to Lewis’s concept of behaving ‘truthfully.’<sup>101</sup>

By focusing on *adherence* to rules, standards, codes, and principles, this thesis’s definition of ethical behaviour furthermore avoids tangential debates about individual interpretations of ethics. While there may be a great deal of value in understanding people’s individual interpretations of ethics, the purpose of this thesis is to identify and analyse the impact of leadership on the behaviour of PSCs and PSC personnel. This thesis emphasizes individuals’ *adherence* to ‘rules, standards, codes, and principles’ and assumes that these guidelines successfully frame commonly accepted social and ethical norms. Specifically, this thesis relies on International Humanitarian Laws (IHLs) outlined by the UN and the Geneva Convention, the Montreux Document, industry standards outlined by the ICoC and ISO 9001 PSC.1 standards, and self-prescribed standard operating procedures implemented by corporate-level PSC leaders to frame social and ethical norms. This thesis assumes that the

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<sup>96</sup> (De Cremer, Mayer, & Schminke, 2010, p. 1)

<sup>97</sup> Lewis (1985, p. 381) defines business ethics as “rules, standards, codes, or principles which provide guidelines for morally right behaviour and truthfulness in specific situations.” Lewis further explains that “rules, standards, codes, or principles” are moral guidelines that, if followed, will prevent unethical behaviour. Morally right behaviour is explained as “individual actions that conform to justice, law, or another standard; individual actions in accord with fact, reason, or truth.”

<sup>98</sup> (Treviño et al., 2006)

<sup>99</sup> (Lewis, 1985, p. 381)

<sup>100</sup> (Ethics Resource Center, 2003, p. 1)

<sup>101</sup> Lewis (1985, p. 382) defines “truthfulness” as “statements and/or actions that conform with facts or that have the appearance of reality.”

majority of civil society agrees with and generally tries to adhere to IHLs based on the diverse array of stakeholders that have contributed to their establishment.<sup>102</sup> A similar assumption is made for the ICoC, which has been signed by a large number of PSCs.<sup>103</sup> It appears that these rules and standards outline acceptable behavioural norms for most Western and Western-aligned stakeholders.<sup>104</sup> Accepting that these rules, standards, codes, and principles encompass commonly-held social and ethical norms enables this thesis to forego discussing the complex range of beliefs that may exist about what actions may (or may not) be 'ethical' at any given time or in a given environment or circumstance. Discussions can instead focus on *how* and *to what extent* leaders can leverage their leadership skills and behaviour to influence others to comply with whichever rules, standards, codes, and principles apply.

### Defining the Private Military and Security Industry

Literature regarding PMSCs began moving out of the field of International Relations and into the evolving sub-field of International Security Studies in the early 2000s. Initially, academic literature was largely limited to attempts to define PMSCs and to describe the context of their operations and activities. Publications by Mandel, Singer, Avant, and Kinsey used descriptive analyses to inform society about the basic structures, services, and performance roles that characterize companies within the private military and security industry.<sup>105</sup> Mandel's taxonomy provided the body of literature with one of the first broad descriptions of the variables that can be used to differentiate between private security organizations.<sup>106</sup> Singer, Avant, and Kinsey each advanced typologies for the industry, cataloguing the services that PMSCs provide and suggesting increasingly-complex criteria for categorizing companies. Each of these four researchers agreed that the global shift towards security privatization in the 1990s was driven by the increasingly globalized nature of international security in the post-Cold War period. Summarily: decreased national military spending and an increase in the total number of low-intensity conflicts worldwide created a

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<sup>102</sup> 195 States are parties to the 1949 Geneva Conventions. Hundreds of other countries have signed to subsequent additional protocols that (amongst other things) address arms trafficking and the humane treatment of others in hostile environments (ICRC, 2013a, p. 610)

<sup>103</sup> 708 PSCs headquartered and operating worldwide had signed their support for the ICOC as of 01SEP2013 (The ICOC Association, 2013)

<sup>104</sup> The great majority of the signatories to the ICOC are British and American PSCs; however, there are also many Middle Eastern and Asian PSCs which target Western clients that have also signed the document.

<sup>105</sup> (Avant, 2005; Kinsey, 2006; Mandel, 2002; Singer, 2003a)

<sup>106</sup> (Mandel, 2002, p. 106)

market for PMSCs.<sup>107</sup> A second theory to explain the rise of the private security industry is that neo-liberalist ideologies, which began gaining influence in the 1970s, gradually made the industry more acceptable (and necessary) to civil society. Neo-liberalist ideologies suggest that security can be a public good but that the costs of some security should be borne by those who are most directly and immediately benefitting from it; i.e. commercial companies and private actors.<sup>108</sup> Although the newer ‘neo-liberalist’ explanation is compatible with traditionally-espoused reasons for the industry’s rise, to accept the importance of this thesis, one needs only to accept that the underlying reasons for the growth of industry are durable and that this growth trend will continue for the foreseeable future. The apparent decision of the international community to regulate rather than ban PSCs and the continued support that PSCs continue to receive in the form of government and commercial contracts further support claims that the private security industry will persist.

There are many indicators that the industry’s growth trend will continue: British PSCs have benefitted from worldwide industry growth and firmly entrenched themselves in the global market.<sup>109</sup> Some experts and government leaders agree that there may be cost advantages to using PSCs in lieu of national military assets.<sup>110</sup> Leaders within the EU and the UN held discussions in 2008 in anticipation of PSCs expanding their global roles. The expectation was that international bodies would soon hire PSCs to support peacekeeping and other global security missions.<sup>111</sup> In 2011, the NATO Director of Strategy noted that “a number” of NATO’s 200 projects are already reliant on contractors from the private security industry.<sup>112</sup> Individual NATO states are permitted to employ PSCs during NATO missions. As early as 2005, DCAF had already declared, “The trend [for relying on PSCs] has arguably reached the point of no return.”<sup>113</sup>

While debates continue over the appropriateness of various methods for distinguishing between private security providers, the works of early researchers established a historical and taxonomical baseline enabling contemporary researchers to move on to more complex discussions. This thesis uses early descriptive works to establish its scope and depth, to

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<sup>107</sup> (Avant, 2005, p. 8; Kinsey, 2006, p. 64; Mandel, 2002, p. 55; Singer, 2003a, pp. 49–52, 55); The findings of these four preeminent researchers have been seconded or supported by many other authors in peer-reviewed journals and publications including: (Fanara, 2011, p. 13; Holmqvist, 2005, p. 2; Shearer, 1998, p. 22; Spicer, 2004, p. 44).

<sup>108</sup> (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2011, pp. 59–62; Alexandra, Baker, & Caparini, 2008, p. 2; Ranito, 2014, pp. 4–5)

<sup>109</sup> (Foreign Commonwealth Office, 2002, *Forward*)

<sup>110</sup> (Prince, 2014, 09:45, 22:40; US Government: Congressional Budget Office, 2008, p. 14)

<sup>111</sup> (White & MacLeod, 2008, p. 966)

<sup>112</sup> (Decamps, 2011)

<sup>113</sup> (Schreier & Caparini, 2005, p. 1)

distinguish between PMSCs and individual mercenaries, and to distinguish between PMCs and PSCs. Furthermore, this thesis agrees with Mandel's belief that privatized foreign security assistance continues to require more integrated analysis than privatized domestic security substitution.<sup>114</sup> This thesis therefore focuses wholly on PSCs that provide security services to clients in foreign countries.

Singer differentiated PMSCs from individual mercenaries according to six factors.<sup>115</sup> Dunigan supports Singer's six factors with the exception of "ties to corporate holdings and financial markets", which she does not explicitly discuss. Dunigan instead discusses a new, seventh factor, positing that individual mercenaries are not positioned to "affect foreign and military policy" to the degree that major PSCs can and that "traditional notions of mercenaries do not generally include such direct involvement in the shaping of state policy."<sup>116</sup> Dunigan evidences her argument by citing the political connectedness of Erik Prince (founder of Blackwater). Other authors seems to agree: Leander asserts also that PSC influence public interests by "[pressuring] firms to lobby publically and legally" in the USA. Minow cites specific instances of lobbying in the USA; and Abrahamsen and Williams provide additional examples of politically-connected PSCs lobbying to change national, public policy in South Africa.<sup>117</sup>

This thesis accepts Singer's and Dunigan's distinctions in order to be able to focus on concerns specific to the contemporary industry and to avoid debates related to ad-hoc military organizations or private soldiers acting as individuals. The typologies evolved by Singer, Avant, and Kinsey are also useful for understanding the scope of services that lie behind the most popular distinction between PMCs and PSCs: PMCs are companies that provide armed "offensive services designed to have a military impact," while PSCs are companies that provide armed "defensive services to protect individuals and property."<sup>118</sup> Although other authors have slightly different definitions of PMCs and PSCs,<sup>119</sup> a commonality amongst them is that PMCs participate in generally "offensive" activities and PSCs participate in generally "defensive" activities.

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<sup>114</sup> (Mandel, 2002)

<sup>115</sup> Singer (2003a, pp. 46–47, *Table 3.2.*) differentiates PMSCs from individual mercenaries in that: 1) PMSCs have permanent business structures as opposed to the ad-hoc structures of mercenary groups, 2) PMSCs are driven by business profit as opposed to individual profit, 3) PMSCs compete as legal, public entities on the open global market, 4) PMSCs offer a wider range of services to varied clientele, 5) PMSCs publically recruit specialized labour, and 6) PMSCs have ties to corporate holdings and financial markets.

<sup>116</sup> (Dunigan, 2011, pp. 17–18)

<sup>117</sup> (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2011, pp. 97–99; Leander, 2006, p. 108; Minow, 2004, p. 1022)

<sup>118</sup> (Makki, Meek, Musah, Crowley, & Lilly, 2001, p. 4)

<sup>119</sup> (Beyani & Lilly, 2001, pp. 16, 18; D. Brooks, 2002b, p. 3; Schreier & Caparini, 2005, pp. 17, 26).

In reality, the distinction between PMCs and PSCs can be muddled. PSCs and PMCs can quickly change the types of services that they offer<sup>120</sup> and some services (for example, equipment or intelligence provision) may serve both offensive and defensive purposes. In practice, contracted defensive services can improve a state's offensive capabilities by simply freeing up military forces.<sup>121</sup> Because "the categories will often merge into one another," some researchers and organizations elect not to distinguish between PSCs and PMCs at all.<sup>122</sup> This makes it exceedingly difficult to gather and analyze descriptive statistics on specific sub-sects of the industry. The Swiss Département Fédéral des Affaires Etrangères (DFAE) acknowledges that "in ordinary parlance" PMCs provide offensive services while PSCs provide defensive services; but to avoid the problems of categorizing companies, DFAE melds the titles, referring to all companies as Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs).<sup>123</sup> Whyte also uses the terms PMC and PSC synonymously.<sup>124</sup>

While PMCs might sometimes provide defensive, protective services in hostile environments, this thesis restricts the definition of PSCs to companies that only provide defensive services and do not provide offensive services. Discussions and analyses of many researchers continue to encompass PMCs, however, according to the definition accepted by this thesis, PMCs ceased to exist in significant numbers in the late 1990s. Today, the grand majority of major private security service providers are pledged to provide only defensive services.<sup>125</sup> This thesis limits its discussions to only include PSCs in order to avoid theoretical debates about PMCs, which performed different missions in a bygone era. PSCs that limit their operations to non-hostile environments are also excluded from the scope of this thesis. These PSCs operate in places where they can be observed and controlled by functional governments, they do not typically use lethal force, and they do not generate the same types of debate that armed, hostile-environment PSCs generate. The following graphic explains the focus of this thesis according to the typologies given by Singer, Avant, and Kinsey:

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<sup>120</sup> (Avant, 2005, pp. 16–17; Berndtsson, 2012, p. 305)

<sup>121</sup> (Whyte, 2003, pp. 594–595)

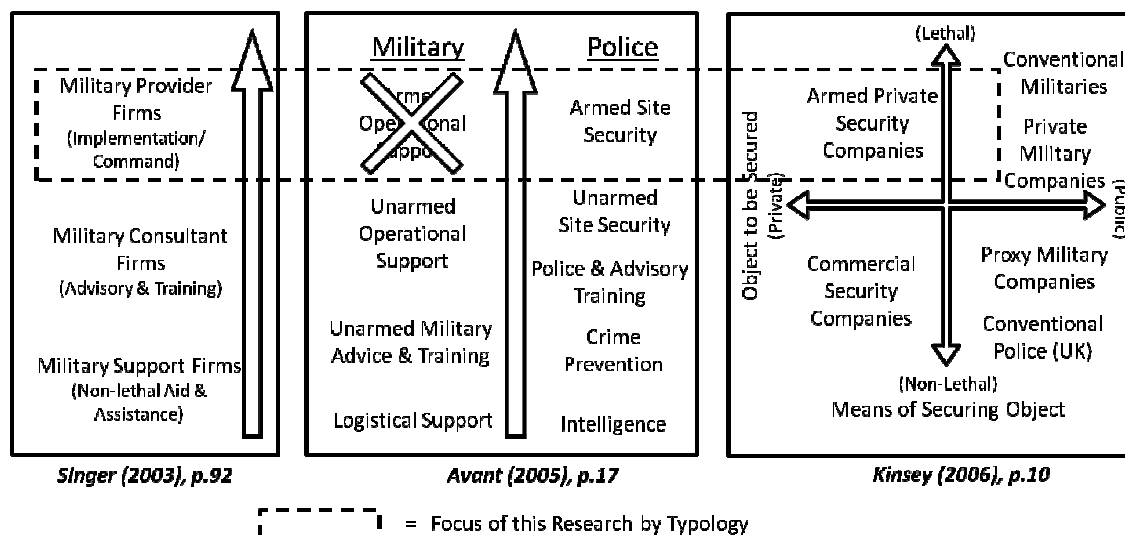
<sup>122</sup> (DFAE, 2008, p. 38; Foreign Commonwealth Office, 2002, p. 9, para. 16)

<sup>123</sup> (DFAE, 2008, p. 38)

<sup>124</sup> (Whyte, 2003, pp. 594–595)

<sup>125</sup> Approximately 700 PSCs have pledged to uphold the standards of the Montreux Document and the ICOC. Although the Montreux Document does not strictly prohibit PSCs from providing offensive services (DFAE, 2008, pp. 37, 39), nearly all PSCs have deliberately distanced themselves from PMCs (Krahmann, 2012, p. 363). Currently, PSCs are not equipped or structured to provide offensive services (Spearin, 2011, p. 202).





After the private security industry was sufficiently defined and delineated, researchers widened their lines of inquiry. Discussions of the “legitimacy” of the industry were popular in the early 2000s however they seem to have culminated in the late 2000s with the general conclusion that regulation begets legitimacy. Concerns about ‘legitimacy’ have been grounded primarily in Weberian ideas about states’ monopolies on violence. PMSCs have the potential to infringe on that monopoly.<sup>126</sup> However, the employment of PMSCs does not necessarily undermine Weberian principles.<sup>127</sup> Whyte noted that, “PMCs do not operate in a political vacuum, but are dependent upon the consent of governments for their livelihood.”<sup>128</sup> A loss of control can occur only when states employ PMSCs and choose not to regulate them;<sup>129</sup> or when “control” is conceptualized according to Hobbesian rather than Republican or Liberalist ideologies.<sup>130</sup> Through regulation, civil societies can retain control over how governments employ PMSCs and governments can retain control over the use of ‘legitimate’ force. Amongst those authors who remained unconvinced of the legitimacy of the industry, there seems to be agreement that the trend for privatizing security will continue into the foreseeable future, rendering further debate on ‘legitimacy’ largely moot. Debates about the extent to which PSCs can positively contribute to national and international security agendas

<sup>126</sup> (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2011, pp. 4–7; Avant, 2005, pp. 45–46; Krahmann, 2010, p. 3; Shannon, 2000)

<sup>127</sup> (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2009, p. 13)

<sup>128</sup> (Whyte, 2003, p. 584)

<sup>129</sup> (Maogoto & Sheehy, 2006, p. 5)

<sup>130</sup> (Krahmann, 2010, pp. 3, 276)

continue to be prevalent in literature;<sup>131</sup> as do discussions of the relationships between PSCs, States, and other industries (especially extractive industries).<sup>132</sup>

This thesis helps to inform an ongoing debate that is linked to both ‘legitimacy’ and ‘contributions’: “Can civil society control the behaviour of PSCs to ensure that PSCs adhere to the social and ethical norms that underpin international human rights laws?” To have a fully-informed debate, the control mechanisms and influence factors affecting PSC behaviour must be better understood.

### Controlling the Behaviour of Private Security Companies

Civil society seeks to control PSCs to ensure that they adhere to social and ethical norms; specifically, those norms that underpin International Humanitarian Laws (IHLs). Although, IHLs are subject to interpretation, they are based on norms and values inherent to Just War Theory including: proportionality, military necessity (utility), civilian (non-combatant) immunity, and restraint.<sup>133</sup> As allegations of PSCs violating social and ethical norms began to increase during the military occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, the Montreux Document was drafted to remind states of their obligations to uphold IHLs with regards to PSCs supporting military operations.<sup>134</sup> The Montreux Document did not present new regulation, however, it served as a precursor for the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoC),<sup>135</sup> which now serves as a baseline document outlining standards that PSCs should adhere to in order to ensure that they too uphold the social and ethical norms underpinning IHLs.

Without belittling the importance of the ICoC or IHLs, academic literature and outbursts of public opinion suggest that civil society prioritizes adherence to the “spirit” of the law (norms) above adherence to the “letter” of the law (regulation). The aftermaths of several high-profile investigations and court cases, which include a 2005 ‘trophy video’ of PSC

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<sup>131</sup> PSCs may have negative effects on military effectiveness and morale (Dunigan, 2011; Hellinger, 2004, p. 200; Leander, 2005, pp. 618–619) and retention (Cotton et al., 2010, p. 19; US Government: Government Accountability Office, 2006, p. 43).

<sup>132</sup> Early publications showed relationships between PMCs (Ashworth, 1996), between PMCs and other governments (Hartung, 1996), and between PMCs and other commercial industries (Chatterjee, 1997). Avant (2004, 2005, 2006) discusses how power and the control over the use of force within governments changes when PSCs are available. Krahmann (2003, 2005a) and Abrahamsen and Williams (2011, pp. 215–216) examine relationships between PSCs and States, noting that different countries are differently able to leverage the positives and negatives of PSC employment.

<sup>133</sup> (Runzo, 2009, p. 56; Walzer, 2006)

<sup>134</sup> (DFAE, 2008)

<sup>135</sup> (ICRC, 2010)

personnel shooting at Iraqi civilians<sup>136</sup> and Blackwater's 2007 'Nisour Square incident,' exemplify society's emphasis on norms over regulation. Following these violent incidences, investigators' initially concluded that PSC personnel had broken no laws such that a prosecution could take place.<sup>137</sup> Despite courtroom victories, however, vehement calls were made for increased regulation over the industry suggesting that PSCs were not exonerated in the eyes of the civil society. Kasher used events like these to discuss how it is possible for PSC members to behave in line with legal codes whilst simultaneously failing to uphold important ethical norms.<sup>138</sup>

The apparent focus on norms (as opposed to laws themselves) seems to increase in importance when viewed in the context of the self-regulating British system and the challenges associated with enforcing laws within hostile environments. In short, the UK's self-regulated environment uses IHLs, the ICoC, PSC.1 standards and self-prescribed standard operating procedures implemented by corporate-level PSC leaders to provide guidelines for morally right behaviour and integrity in specific situations. The enforcement of these laws, codes, and standards in hostile environments, however, remains a key concern.<sup>139</sup> Structural limitations in hostile environments, including restricted movement, communication, and information, impede the abilities of governments and NGOs to monitor and enforce laws, codes, and standards. Maogoto and Sheehy argue that, even if UK regulations were strengthened, "the real risk of gross misbehaviour" by PSCs is not in the UK but "in the execution of contracts...in weak or failing States."<sup>140</sup> International measures to regulate PSCs are weak to the point that "criminal prosecution of [PSC] employees who have committed abuses are rare and fraught with a number of obstacles that go from blanket immunity...to [failing to meet] the threshold of 'violation of international law'."<sup>141</sup> Thus far, the question of control has been primarily addressed by researchers examining political, psychological, social, and regulatory factors that influence contractor behaviour.

From a political theory perspective, Krahmann and Wolfendale assert that PSCs cannot be trusted to behave ethically because they fall outside of the traditional Huntingtonian civil-

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<sup>136</sup> (Madsen, 2005)

<sup>137</sup> Although four Blackwater contractors were eventually convicted of charges related to the Nisour Square shooting, these convictions were only realized in April 2015, nearly eight years later. In the immediate aftermath of the event, prior to these convictions, both Iraqi and Western stakeholders used the Nisour Square shooting to exemplify the need for increased regulation (Woolf, 2015).

<sup>138</sup> (Kasher, 2008, p. 244); Kasher's final assessment was that the financially-driven motives of PMSCs push PSC members to behave in line with legal codes and not ethical norms.

<sup>139</sup> (Singer, 2001, p. 215)

<sup>140</sup> (Maogoto & Sheehy, 2009, p. 131)

<sup>141</sup> (Francioni, 2008, p. 963)

military relations model.<sup>142</sup> Other authors agree with concerns that the employment of PSCs undermines the democratic processes that ensure politicians remain accountable to their constituencies.<sup>143</sup> Additional concerns related to political theories and social contracts include that availability of PSCs increases the likelihood of international violence.<sup>144</sup> Both Krahmann and Wolfendale point to problems with democratic oversight and the non-representative nature of PSC personnel; and both authors uphold the civil-military contract as a quasi-guarantor of civil society's control over the ethical use of force.<sup>145</sup> Once the civil-military contract is side-stepped through the hire of PSCs, governments no longer have to "justify the use of the military to the public" and governments gain "complete control over the public's perception and reaction to a war."<sup>146</sup> Mandel also noted that PSCs may "unintentionally...sidestep democratic processes" mainly by allowing government officials to make decisions without public debate.<sup>147</sup> The implication of this argument is that governments can free themselves of moral constraints by hiring PSCs and those PSCs can operate with ethical impunity on the behalf of their morally unrestrained client.

While governments may use PSCs in ways that erode or bypass democratic controls, this does not preordain unethical behaviour on the part of PSCs. Strategic-level debates to determine when governments should be allowed to employ PSCs are different than operational-level debates about how civil society can control PSCs after the decision has been made to employ them. Regardless of governments' motives for employing PSCs, PSC leaders invariably retain the option to behave ethically. Krahmann theorizes that contractors are (by the nature of their organizations) amoral and without humanitarian, patriotic, or democratic values.<sup>148</sup> Although the values of contractors and national soldiers may differ in some ways, a full understanding of the ethos common to PSC personnel has not yet been established such that informed value judgments can be made. The leaders of many PSCs have been renowned for their patriotism and support for Western ideologies.<sup>149</sup> 'Contractor ethos' merits further investigation.

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<sup>142</sup> (Krahmann, 2008; Wolfendale, 2009)

<sup>143</sup> (Avant, 2004, p. 155; Dunigan, 2011, pp. 27, 157; Salzman, 2008, pp. 866–871; Singer, 2005, p. 4)

<sup>144</sup> (Avant, 2006, p. 520)

<sup>145</sup> (Krahmann, 2008; Wolfendale, 2009)

<sup>146</sup> Wolfendale (2009). Although Wolfendale refers to PMCs throughout her chapter, she makes no clear distinction between offensive and defence service providers; her arguments could pertain equally to PSCs.

<sup>147</sup> (Mandel, 2002, pp. 42–46)

<sup>148</sup> (Krahmann, 2008, pp. 259–260)

<sup>149</sup> Scahill (2008) describes the staunch patriotic and Western values of Eric Prince, the founder of one of the most (in)famous PSCs in history (Blackwater), in detail. It may be noteworthy that contractors for PMCs appear to be equally capable of having strong nationalistic values. Hoe (1994) describes the patriotism and Western values of David Stirling, the founder of the first PMC (Watchguard).

Research has shown that when leaders “create an institutional culture that prevents misconduct and human rights violations,” organizations reap benefits in the form of improved internal performance measures (such as lower employee turnover and higher productivity) and external performance measures (such as improved abilities to work alongside agencies in peace support operations and improved relations with host nation partners).<sup>150</sup> As such, many PSCs have identified that it is in their best interests to at least appear to behave ethically regardless of the standards imposed upon them by any particular clients. PSCs are aware of the need to be perceived as legitimate, ethical, security providers;<sup>151</sup> PSCs have attempted to improve their images by partnering with humanitarian actors;<sup>152</sup> and PSCs are aware that ethical behaviour gives them a tangible performance advantage over many national militaries.<sup>153</sup> Thus, while some literature suggests that PSCs are outside of civil society’s control (due to the nature of their relationship to civil society and governments), these arguments fail to acknowledge the diverse population of stakeholders that PSCs must remain sensitive to.

Debates about the control of PSCs have also been grounded in psychological research. Some researchers have questioned whether the values and personal motivations of PSC personnel positively influence compliance with social and ethical norms. Several authors suggest that contractors lack the moral motivations that allegedly help to normalize the behaviour of military personnel.<sup>154</sup> Pattison summarizes these arguments saying, “in extreme cases [financial motivations] suggest an amoral approach and, in particular, [indicate] few limits on what one might do for personal gain.”<sup>155</sup> Kasher hypothesizes situations where profit-motivations could compel a PSC to behave unethically but he fails to account for any mitigating factors (including the concept of ‘repeated play,’ contractual obligations, and client oversight). Kasher also does not acknowledge situations where (hypothetically) national militaries might be equally or more compelled to behave unethically for resource-related reasons.<sup>156</sup> All organizations are constrained by budgets and human resources. It is unfair to

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<sup>150</sup> Quote from Schulz and Yeung (2008, pp. 3–4) who primarily address improvements in external operational effectiveness stemming from gender awareness and diversity; their assertions are complimented by Zhu et al. (2004) who found that institutionalized ethics influence measure s of internal organizational effectiveness.

<sup>151</sup> (Perrin, 2006, pp. 628–633)

<sup>152</sup> (Joachim & Schneiker, 2012)

<sup>153</sup> (D. Brooks, 2000b, 2002a, p. 2; Sandline International, 1998)

<sup>154</sup> Lynch and Walsh (2000), Pattison (2010) and Scheier and Caparini (2005, p. 46) point to intrinsic and consequentialist objections to financially-driven participants of warfare.

<sup>155</sup> (Pattison, 2008, p. 146)

<sup>156</sup> (Kasher, 2008, p. 242)

rank PSCs below militaries for resource-driven decisions without also addressing the extent to which militaries might make similar decisions based on resource constraints.

Arguments about the ethical capacities of contractors seem incomplete: there is insufficient evidence to prove that nationalism, altruism, or “good intentions” necessarily result in ethical behaviour, that national soldiers are not equally motivated by financial incentives, or that contractors abandon the values that they learned in the military when they leave national service. Pattison addresses these shortcomings in his arguments against PSCs and tries to compromise by suggesting, although financial motives do not guarantee limitless unethical behaviour, in theory, we can assume that financially motivated war-participants are less ethical.<sup>157</sup> This thesis rejects Pattison’s assumption and seeks to determine the extent to which leadership impacts on PSC personnel’s ethical behaviour. Several studies show that certain values and feelings of nationalism stay with people as they move from the military or law enforcement jobs into PSCs.<sup>158</sup> Thus, while some literature suggests that PSCs cannot be controlled by civil society because contractors are differently motivated, these arguments fail to account for values, skills, and behaviours that might carry over from military service into PSC employment. These arguments also fail to demonstrate a direct link between financial motivation and an unwillingness to adhere to ethical and social norms.

From a social theory perspective, Zimbardo asserts that human rights violations may be inevitable when people: (a) identify themselves as having the capacity to dominate others and (b) are challenged to institute their own brand of control in the face of an unclear or failing system of governance. The findings of Zimbardo’s *Stanford Prison Experiment* have been used to explain the abusive behaviour of military and contracted personnel at Abu Ghraib prison in 2004.<sup>159</sup> Although the contractors at Abu Ghraib were armed with weapons less lethal than firearms, they were in positions of power that are arguably, analogous to those positions inhabited by PSC personnel operating amongst unarmed civilians. Reicher and Haslam later conducted a similar experiment that, although interpreted differently, yielded similar results: those in power quickly established a tyrannical, forceful, regime over those

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<sup>157</sup> (Pattison, 2008, 2010)

<sup>158</sup> (Franke & Schaub, 2009; Franke & Von Boemcken, 2011) Unfortunately, both of these studies sample contractors from a law enforcement background. The grand majority of PSC personnel have military backgrounds; thus more research is necessary to determine the values of the grand majority of PSC contractors.

<sup>159</sup> (Zimbardo, 2007a, 2007b, p. 1) The *Stanford Prison Experiment* divided ordinary, similar males into two groups, labelling one group as “guards” and the other as “prisoners.” The guards were given a high degree of power over the prisoners and instructed to establish systems of governance as they saw fit. Psychological tests conducted at the start of the research attempted to set personalities, ethical codes, and culture as constants; leaving reward, discipline, legitimate, referent, and expert power as variables. The empowered guard population soon resorted to abusing the disempowered prisoner population despite the two groups’ similarities.

they were meant to control.<sup>160</sup> The implication of these studies is that societal control stems primarily from governance and external oversight. Although armed PSC personnel may possess both the means for violence and (arguably) socially-constructed ideas of masculinity that encourage the domination of others, human rights violations by contractors should not be considered inevitable. Higate rejects claims that violent “overkill” behaviours occur as isolated incidences stemming from individuals’ upbringings or backgrounds.<sup>161</sup> Higate instead asserts that outbursts of aggression in hostile environments are more likely systemic failures resulting from a chain of interactions where violence becomes a mechanism for tension release. Together, the findings of Zimbardo, Reicher and Haslam, and Higate suggest that civil society can control the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel by encouraging PSC leaders to establish systems of corporate governance to guide contractors in places that lack strong national or international governance. PSC leaders might also improve ethical behaviour by establishing constructive mechanisms for tension release within their organizations. Some examples of constructive tension-releasing mechanisms may include fair leave rotations, access to gym and sports facilities, or processes through which complaints can be lodged without undue fear of retaliation.

Finally, historical and contemporary literature has extensively examined the regulatory options available to civil society for ensuring that PSC personnel adhere to social and ethical norms.<sup>162</sup> After the turn of the century, the amount of literature pertaining to the industry increased exponentially as Western campaigns in Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003) brought dramatic growth and public attention. To explain the increase in PSC literature, some authors point to the Western military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan in general,<sup>163</sup> while others refer more specifically to the killings of four Blackwater employees in 2004, which were seen by many as the catalyst for US military forces to launch a costly attack on Fallujah, Iraq.<sup>164</sup>

Today, publications debating whether existing international laws pertain to PSCs appear to make up a large share of the body of literature. Many publications debate whether existing international laws are adequate to limit and control PSC behaviour: publications catalogue options for regulations;<sup>165</sup> they discuss the applicability of existing international law to

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<sup>160</sup> (Reicher & Haslam, 2006)

<sup>161</sup> (Higate, 2012a, p. 18)

<sup>162</sup> “Security Sector Reform” (SSR) is a popular term that encompasses efforts to modify laws and regulations

<sup>163</sup> (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2009, p. 1; Schreier & Caparini, 2005, p. 4)

<sup>164</sup> (Carr, 2008, pp. 22–24; Malkasian, 2006, pp. 426, 433; West, 2006, p. 7)

<sup>165</sup> (Beyani & Lilly, 2001; Foreign Commonwealth Office, 2002; Holmqvist, 2005; Jennings, 2006)

PSCs;<sup>166</sup> they argue that strong states have more power to regulate PSCs than third world states;<sup>167</sup> and finally, they level criticisms at states' unsatisfactory attempts to close gaps in regulations.<sup>168</sup> Additional publications debate the rights that existing international laws afford to PSC personnel. The status of PSC personnel captured or attacked in conflict zones is linked to whether or not PSC personnel are defined as "combatants" or "non-combatants." The 'combatant' or 'non-combatant' status of PSC personnel in hostile environments is still debated by some researchers.<sup>169</sup> Lastly, the Montreux Document, the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers, and ANSI/ASIS ISO 9001 Standards (PSC.1-4) have become core documents exemplifying regulatory growth and evolution.<sup>170</sup> Although British PSCs initially sought externally implemented regulations,<sup>171</sup> efforts at self-prescribed regulation have now evolved to the point that most stakeholders within the British PSC industry are satisfied that accountability and legitimacy can be achieved without a great deal of externally-imposed regulation. The majority of stakeholders in the UK (including politicians and companies within the industry) approve of the current system of self-regulation which has succeeded in setting measureable standards without hindering companies' abilities to rapidly respond to clients.<sup>172</sup>

Regulatory efforts, however, have not been enough to satisfy critics of the industry. Weaver, for example, cautions against concluding that evolved ethical codes equate to more ethical behaviour.<sup>173</sup> This thesis asserts that ethical codes may be adopted for a variety of reasons unrelated to ethics and that ethical codes are not always enforced. More research is necessary to understand the relationship between code usage and code consequences. Publicized scandals involving PSCs in Africa, former Yugoslavia, Iraq, and Afghanistan continue to be cited as evidence that existing regulations are insufficient to ensure that contractors adhere to prescribed norms.<sup>174</sup> It will take years for new standards measuring

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<sup>166</sup> (Chesterman, 2008; Chesterman & Lehnardt, 2007b; Kinsey, 2005a; Krahmann, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c; Maogoto & Sheehy, 2006, 2009)

<sup>167</sup> (Dumlupinar, 2010; Krahmann, 2003)

<sup>168</sup> (McNaylor, 2010)

<sup>169</sup> (Bosch, 2007; Cameron, 2007).

<sup>170</sup> The Montreux Document (DFAE, 2008), the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICRC, 2010), and ANSI/ASIS ISO 9001 Standards (PSC.1-4) (ASIS International, 2012c).

<sup>171</sup> Sandline International (1998) cited governments and international institutions (UN, EU, and OAU) as having a role in "[designing] and implement the appropriate package of measures." Herbst (1999, p. 121) examines EO's and Sandline's desire for external regulation in detail. Brooks (2000b, p. 137) further validates Herbst's examination.

<sup>172</sup> (Beese, 2012)

<sup>173</sup> (Weaver, 1993, p. 56)

<sup>174</sup> Many scandals involving PMSCs have triggered calls for increased regulation, including: the 1998 "Arms to Africa" or "Sandline Affair" (Beyani & Lilly, 2001, p. 4; Spicer, 2004; UK Foreign Affairs Committee, 1999); the scope of MPRI's involvement in Yugoslavia (Gul, 2006, p. 288); and deaths at the hands of contractors in



security companies' adherence to human-rights-driven codes of conduct to be thoroughly tested;<sup>175</sup> and thorough testing will require a variety of contexts (conflicts, companies, and clients) and operating environments that may not exist again anytime soon.<sup>176</sup> Even after testing is complete, Britain's self-regulating system is characterized by voluntary adherence to organizational charters and other non-legally-binding standards of conduct. Finally, regulations require interpretation. Presently, discussions of regulation commonly stop short of addressing the human aspect of translating written ideals into normalized behaviour.

In the absence of reliable, independent officials to interpret, monitor, and enforce ethical behaviour in many hostile environments, PSC leaders are principally responsible for ensuring the ethical behaviour of the industry on a day-to-day basis. The viability of the UK's self-regulated system is therefore heavily dependent on the abilities of PSC leaders, not auditors, to leverage power and influence subordinates in accordance with established social and ethical norms. Although both stakeholders and critics seem to agree that weak or non-existent regulations undermine the legitimacy of the industry, there is a gap in the literature: the leaders responsible for helping to draft, implement, and enforce codified standards on a day-to-day basis have not yet been examined in detail.

### Leadership in the Context of PSCs

The lack of consensus amongst experts on the extent of leadership's impact is, in large part, due to contextual differences between research testing environments. To date, leadership research has been conducted primarily within the context of commercial, military, and political organizations. While existing research is useful for informing this study, contextual differences between commercial, military, and PSC environments prevent theories created from one organization from being directly applied to other organizations. To "make possible research and theory that form part of a larger whole," observations must be analysed within context. Observations must be linked "to a set of relevant facts, events, or points of

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Iraq (Cameron, 2006, p. 574; D. H. Chen, 2009, p. 101; Jennings, 2006, p. 17; Schweers, 2009, p. 8; US Government, 2007a) and in Afghanistan (Thornton, 2008, p. 18). "Where a [PSC] employee engages in misconduct...there are concerns that the mechanisms to hold the private contractor accountable for his conduct are inadequate" (Ralby, Tonkin, & Wilmshurst, 2011, p. 6).

<sup>175</sup> Published industry standards developed by ANSI/ASIS "enable PSCs to demonstrate and certify compliance with the Montreux Document and ICoC's principles when operating in conditions where the rule of law has been undermined by conflict or disaster" (ASIS International, 2012a).

<sup>176</sup> The US and UK may not be ready for new contingency operations on the scale of Iraq and Afghanistan for at least a decade.

view.”<sup>177</sup> Context influences explanations for constraints or opportunities for leadership behaviours and attitudes.<sup>178</sup> Context influences peoples’ perceptions of which skills and behaviours are important factors of effective leadership.<sup>179</sup> And context can help to explain why leader behaviours perceived to be important in commercial organizations are not necessarily the same as the leader behaviours perceived to be important in military organizations (or PSCs).<sup>180</sup> This literature review analyses commercial and military contexts to determine what previous research findings might be applicable in the case of PSCs.

Leadership in a military context takes place within “a large, diverse...traditionally hierarchical institution that finds itself in an uncertain, volatile world executing missions with very high consequences;” militaries have “an all-consuming nature that demands nearly all the attention, time, and commitment from its members.”<sup>181</sup> The potential for loss of life and the destruction of high value property is intrinsic to military operations. The military context furthermore includes the need to manage outsourced services, to care for the family situations of military members, and to transition rapidly between training, garrison, and combat environments. Wong, Bliese, and McGurk review military leadership in terms of organizational structures, environment, critical tasks, capability, culture, and effectiveness; thus, the findings of their review appear equally applicable to all Western militaries with similar characteristics. Their research is assumed to be valid for understanding the context of leadership within the British military.

Leadership in a commercial context takes place within institutions that “concentrate their attention on their financial or physical resources.”<sup>182</sup> Commercial environments are diverse to the point that context is best described in terms of commercial *goals*. Commercial goals tend to be profit-oriented and more universal regardless of industry. While capitalist societies accept financially-motivated commercial aspirations, the general public does expect a certain degree of fairness and rule-adherence in the pursuit of profit. Organizations that violate ethical norms can be legally and socially punished.<sup>183</sup> The social legitimacy of 21<sup>st</sup> century corporations and business leaders has declined over the past decade due to public scandals involving business leaders and unfair wealth distribution. Thus, although PSC leaders have

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<sup>177</sup> (Rousseau & Fried, 2001, p. 1)

<sup>178</sup> (Johns, 2001, p. 32)

<sup>179</sup> (Antonakis et al., 2003, p. 261; Blair & Hunt, 1986, p. 147; Bryman, Stephens, & Campo, 1996, p. 365)

<sup>180</sup> (Van Fleet, 1976, p. 31)

<sup>181</sup> (Wong, Bliese, & McGurk, 2003, p. 660)

<sup>182</sup> (Bass, 2008, p. 727)

<sup>183</sup> (Bass, 2008, p. 728; Gill, 2011a, pp. 38–39); Note that organizations that violate ethical norms are not without values; their values may simply be ‘destructive’ or negative (McCuddy, 2008, p. 10).

attracted scrutiny for a variety of reasons, negative publicity does not make PSCs unique in the commercial sector. Organizational effectiveness, organizational efficiency, and ethical behaviour are dominating concerns with regards to leadership in the commercial context.<sup>184</sup> This literature review finds that the majority of leadership theories are either specifically designed or well-suited for application in commercial contexts.

Neither the commercial or military contexts fully encompass the context of PSCs. PSCs are generally characterized by a paramilitary culture, which stems from the services and roles they perform, hiring practices, and organizational structures.<sup>185</sup> PSCs in hostile environments often perform roles that would cause them to be defined as “direct participants in hostilities” under international law.<sup>186</sup> As a result, many of the roles outsourced to PSCs are arguably best performed by people with military or police experience.<sup>187</sup> It follows that PSCs, including British PSCs, are often organizationally structured in ways that allow pre-existing military ranks, personal powers, and professional bonds to continue to have influence.<sup>188</sup> This choice of structure is unsurprising given the importance of competency, personal power, and trustworthiness that people place on *in extremis* leaders.

According to Kinsey, PSCs normally adhere to either loosely coupled organic structures –characterized by flat hierarchies and cliquish core management teams– or divisionalised and hierarchical structures –characterized by responsibility matrixes common to large commercial enterprises.<sup>189</sup> Either type of structure allows for PSCs to have some leaders performing operations in hostile environments while other leaders perform administrative tasks in non-hostile environments. Both types of structures include multiple layers of decision-making

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<sup>184</sup> Many leadership researchers have managed to link these three themes together, researching how ethics and values impacts upon effectiveness and efficiency (Albion, 2008; Burns, 2010; Gill, 2011b, p. 164; Jackson & Parry, 2011, pp. 112–133; Minkes, Small, & Chatterjee, 1999; Russell, 2001).

<sup>185</sup> PSCs are “profitable corporate business[es] working as a military force-multiplier with a mission construed in humanitarian terms” (Carmola, 2010, p. 37).

<sup>186</sup> PSC personnel are direct participants in hostilities based on the roles and tasks that PSC personnel undertake in hostile environments (Krahmann, 2012, p. 352); The Montreux Document (DFAE, 2008, p. 37) expressly states that PSC activities often make PSCs direct participants. Melzer’s (2008, p. 1030) assessment that PSCs engaged in defensive roles are not, by strict definition, direct participants in hostilities (because they fail to meet the criteria of *belligerent nexus*) appears to be a rare dissenting voice; most researchers agree that PSCs are direct participants in hostilities.

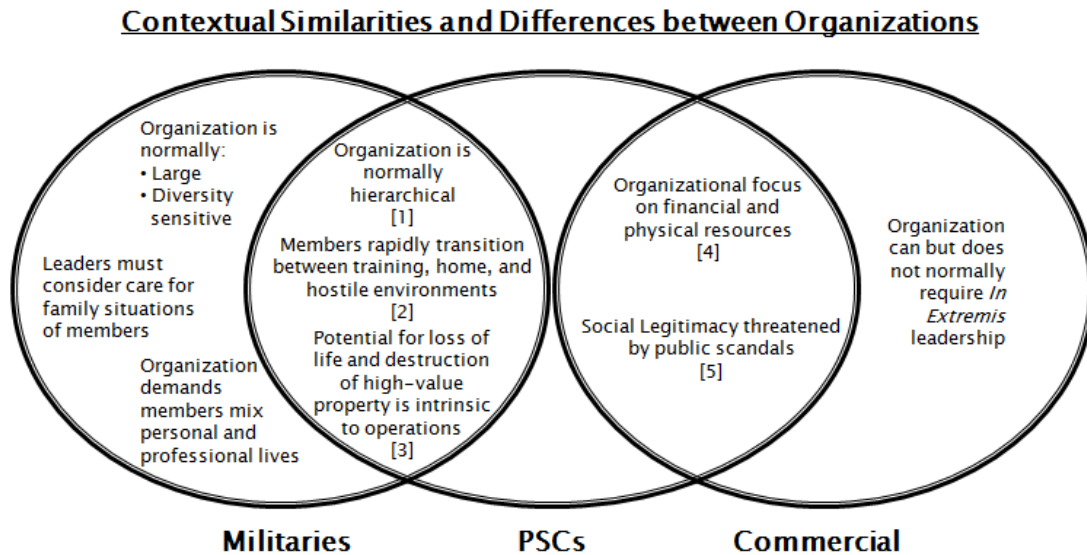
<sup>187</sup> Most companies in the private military and security industry are founded and led by people with military, special operations, or police backgrounds. Dew & Hudgens (2009, pp. 9–10) estimate that 38% of PMF founders have prior military experience; 7% have special operations experience; 7% have police experience; and a further 38% have intelligence services experience. Although the specific percentages are debatable, these findings support the general conclusion that most PMFs are founded and led by people with military, special operations, or police backgrounds.

<sup>188</sup> (Kinsey, 2005b, pp. 197–198)

<sup>189</sup> (Kinsey, 2005b, pp. 189, 197, 199); Historically, British PSCs have tended to favour the loosely coupled organic structure; however, neither type of structure has proven to affect ethical or financial performance or PSCs’ abilities to procure contracts.

authority from which the research underlying this thesis can create a well-defined sampling frame.

The following diagram depicts generalized (and arguable) differences and similarities in the organizational contexts of Western militaries, commercial companies, and PSCs:



**References:**

- (1) PSCs are often structured in ways reminiscent of military structures (Kinsey, 2005b, pp. 197–198)
- (2) PSC personnel are normally responsible for attending training courses in their own time; normal contracts require approximately nine weeks of work in a hostile environment followed by a three week leave period.
- (3) PSCs are armed and use lethal means to secure public and private goods (Kinsey, 2006, p. 10)
- (4) Commercial companies, including PSCs, are, by definition, profit motivated (Bass, 2008, p. 727)
- (5) PSC scandals include human rights violations and allegations over cost effectiveness (US Government, 2007a)

Using Bowers and Seashore’s taxonomy of leadership styles, Van Fleet determined that “one-third to one-half of critical leader behaviours may be of a general nature while one-half to two thirds may be specific to particular situations.”<sup>190</sup> This can be interpreted to mean that there is a “reasonable stability” of critical leadership behaviours within organizational contexts but not between organizational contexts.<sup>191</sup> Perceptual differences in various organizational contexts of militaries exemplify how context can affect research findings. Perceptual differences have been found between military services,<sup>192</sup> between combat and combat-support units,<sup>193</sup> between combat veterans and non-combat soldiers,<sup>194</sup> and between

<sup>190</sup> (Bowers & Seashore, 1966; Van Fleet, 1976, p. 35)

<sup>191</sup> (Van Fleet, 1976, pp. 31–32)

<sup>192</sup> (Wong et al., 2003, p. 659; Yardley & Neal, 2007, p. 26)

<sup>193</sup> (Yukl & Van Fleet, 1982)

<sup>194</sup> (McGurk, Castro, Thomas, Messer, & Sinclair, 2005)

operational and training units.<sup>195</sup> Variations have also been discovered in the distributions of critical leader behaviours between drill and non-drill units.<sup>196</sup> These differences inform this thesis by suggesting that PSCs (like militaries) may have multiple organizational contexts and that this thesis will need to examine PSCs at multiple levels of decision-making authority to accurately understand leadership within the context of PSCs.<sup>197</sup>

Van Fleet's "reasonable stability" theory is not sufficient to understand the extent to which leadership skills and behaviours influence the ethical behaviour of British PSCs in hostile environments. British PSCs share characteristics of both commercial and military organizations but do not mirror either. Directly extrapolating findings from commercial and military organizations is therefore impossible. Also, while Van Fleet's "reasonable stability" theory suggests that one-third to one-half of critical leader behaviours will be applicable at all levels of a PSC's hierarchy, without further research, we cannot pinpoint exactly which leader behaviours are critical.

### Leadership as a Mechanism for Controlling PSCs

Although literature has examined many factors relevant to influencing the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel, thus far 'leadership' as an influence factor appears to have been overlooked. PSC literature's lack of discussion of leadership is odd given that longitudinal studies conducted by the ERC have consistently supported the need for individual and collective leadership to be at the centre of explanations for ethical conduct. The ERC is a major independent research consultancy that defines ethical leadership behaviour as: "discussing ethics openly, keeping employees informed, keeping promises, and modelling ethical behaviour."<sup>198</sup> ERC studies have determined, for example, that nearly 66% of pressure to behave unethically comes from supervisors, top management, or co-workers who are perceived to behave unethically.<sup>199</sup> Also, employee misconduct within organizations can be reduced by up to 50% when individual leaders exhibit ethical behaviour.<sup>200</sup> And, two of

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<sup>195</sup> (Kolditz, 2006, p. 657; Van Fleet, Chamberlain, & Gass, 1975)

<sup>196</sup> (Van Fleet, 1976, p. 28, Table 1; Van Fleet et al., 1975)

<sup>197</sup> "What passes for leadership at [one] level will not necessarily pass muster at street-level" (Bryman et al., 1996, p. 365)

<sup>198</sup> (Ethics Resource Center, 2003); Longitudinal studies referenced for this research include: (Ethics Resource Center, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011).

<sup>199</sup> (Ethics Resource Center, 2000); ERC (2007, p. 16) lists further reasons.

<sup>200</sup> (Ethics Resource Center, 2003)

the four components of constructing an ethical organizational culture (ethical leadership and supervisor reinforcement) are directly related to individual leadership behaviour.<sup>201</sup>

Furthermore, research done throughout the 1990s has established that an ethical climate cultivated by supervisory attention and a leadership-driven emphasis on values does more to encourage ethical behaviour than even the best-worded rules and regulations.<sup>202</sup> More recently, the ERC found that this remains true today: establishing an “enterprise-wide ethical culture” within a company rather than placing “a single-minded emphasis on compliance with laws, regulations, and company standards” is the most effective way to promote ethical behaviour.<sup>203</sup> Within military and commercial organizations, researchers have found individual leadership to be very influential.<sup>204</sup> Leadership behaviours are not only “dominant variables” in the immediate moral reasoning abilities of subordinate groups and individuals,<sup>205</sup> but prolonged exposure to consistent leadership behaviours can influence the total “integrity capacity” of subordinates over time.<sup>206</sup> As one might expect, positive leadership behaviours affect subordinates’ behaviour positively. Conversely, abusive leadership behaviours exacerbate factors that increase the risk of unethical behaviour.<sup>207</sup>

Leadership may be such a strong influencing factor that one could argue that individual PSC leaders must see themselves as behavioural role-models if they are to elicit ethical behaviour from their subordinates. “Most adults’ thinking about right and wrong is highly susceptible to external influence.”<sup>208</sup> Deshpande notes that individual leadership is such a strong influence factor on employees’ ethical choices that leaders “cannot expect their subordinates to act ethically unless they themselves exhibit ethical behaviour.”<sup>209</sup> Because ethical climates can vary between levels within organizations,<sup>210</sup> separate analyses are necessary for PSC leaders at different levels of decision-making authority.

Collective leadership behaviours have been shown to be equally influential as individual leadership behaviours when they help to establish an “enterprise-wide ethical culture.”<sup>211</sup> “Collective leadership behaviours” describe the influence factors that the sum of an

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<sup>201</sup> (Ethics Resource Center, 2007, p. 9)

<sup>202</sup> (A. Chen, Sawyers, & Williams, 1997; Minkes et al., 1999, p. 334; Sims, 1992, p. 516; Weaver & Treviño, 1999; Wimbush & Shepard, 1994, pp. 640, 645)

<sup>203</sup> (Ethics Resource Center, 2007, p. 9)

<sup>204</sup> (Avey, Palanski, & Walumbwa, 2011)

<sup>205</sup> (Dukerich, Nichols, Elm, & Vollrath, 1990b, p. 487)

<sup>206</sup> (Petrick & Quinn, 2001)

<sup>207</sup> (Tepper, 2000, p. 186)

<sup>208</sup> (Treviño et al., 2006, p. 955)

<sup>209</sup> (Deshpande et al., 2008, p. 539)

<sup>210</sup> (Victor & Cullen, 1988; Wimbush, Shepard, & Markham, 1997, p. 1713)

<sup>211</sup> Quotes from the ERC (2007, p. 9); earlier researchers came to similar conclusions but discussed their findings via less-pointed terminology (Treviño et al., 1998, p. 471).

organization's leaders have built (or permitted) into their organization's culture. In this thesis, the term "collective leadership behaviour" is adapted from the term "collective leadership." Collective leadership describes a power-sharing scenario amongst a network of diversely skilled, uniquely positioned, formal and informal leaders. Collective leadership at the strategic level is likely a more powerful influencer than individual leadership;<sup>212</sup> collective leadership is normally distributed according to critical expertise;<sup>213</sup> and all persons who make up a collective leadership network are not equal contributors.<sup>214</sup> Understanding these facts is essential to analyzing the impact of collective leadership behaviours.

Collective leadership behaviours are observable through norms such as Standard Operating Procedures, vetting and hiring practices, and disciplinary patterns. They can also be observed in leaders' general attitudes about equality and fairness. Clear links have been established between "collective leadership behaviours" and the ethical behaviour of subordinates, particularly when collective leadership behaviours impact on an organization's ethical climate.<sup>215</sup> When vetting and hiring practices rigorously screen the backgrounds and motivations of prospective employees or when companies reinforce standards of good discipline, then collective leadership behaviours contribute to making organizational cultures conducive to ethical behaviour.<sup>216</sup>

Literature suggests that commercial organizations can be controlled by civil society and that individual and collective leadership behaviours are important to facilitating social control.<sup>217</sup> PSCs are commercial organizations and may therefore be subject to the same mechanisms of social control. Previous researchers have studied the impact of individual leadership on ethical behaviour within militaries<sup>218</sup> and commercial organizations;<sup>219</sup> but they have stopped short of making specific mention of PSCs. Other researchers have analysed the capacity of PSCs to behave according to ethical norms solely as a function of limits imposed by regulatory, political, psychological, and social factors.<sup>220</sup> Although a small amount of

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<sup>212</sup> (Denis, Lamothe, & Langley, 2001, p. 810)

<sup>213</sup> (Friedrich, Vessey, Schuelke, Ruark, & Mumford, 2009, p. 933)

<sup>214</sup> (Leithwood & Mascal, 2008, p. 530)

<sup>215</sup> (A. Chen et al., 1997)

<sup>216</sup> (Franke & Von Boemcken, 2011; Schulz & Yeung, 2008, p. 9)

<sup>217</sup> (Ethics Resource Center, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011)

<sup>218</sup> (Benest, 2007, p. 11, 2012; Karrasch et al., 2011; UK Ministry of Defence, 2004, p. 23; US Government, 2006, p2-4; Yukl & Van Fleet, 1982, p. 100)

<sup>219</sup> (Bass, 2008, Chapter 5; Judge et al., 2002, p. 766, Table 1; Kouzes & Posner, 1989, 1995, 2008, 2010a, pp. 14–23, 2010b)

<sup>220</sup> Government and self-imposed regulatory factors that affect PSC behaviours have been examined and debated in detail (D. Brooks & Streng, 2012; Cockayne, 2008; Cockayne et al., 2009; Kinsey, 2005a, 2005c, 2008; Kinsey & Patterson, 2012). Abrahamsen and Williams (2009, 2011) and Ranito (2014) assess the interplay between regulation, international politics, and neo-liberalist political theory as it pertains to PSCs. Vrdoljak

research has addressed collective leadership behaviour within PSCs, these findings have been limited to only those collective leadership behaviours that affect employee diversity.<sup>221</sup> Diversity factors including gender, race, identity, and the motivations of contractors have all been linked to PSC members' capacities for violent or unethical behaviour. Some research suggests that collective leadership behaviours that emphasize "gender awareness education, and recruiting and retention of female employees" can minimize macho, aggressive behaviours common to some military and police subcultures that lead to human rights violations in hostile environments.<sup>222</sup> However, these suggestions have yet to be rigorously explored. By stopping short of comprehensively analyzing the impact of leadership on ethical issues, researchers have failed to construct a credible explanation of how leadership might help civil society to better control the behaviour of PSCs. This thesis takes a new, leadership-centric approach to understanding the mechanisms available to civil society for controlling the behaviour of PSCs.

### Conclusion of the Review

Many texts in the PSC literature attempt to assess civil society's ability to control the behaviour of PSCs. However, those texts fail to comprehensively analyse all of the factors that influence ethical behaviour. This thesis helps to complete existing arguments by exploring the impact of leadership on the ethical behaviour of private security personnel; thus enabling leadership theories to further inform wider debates about civil society's ability to ensure that PSC personnel adhere to the social and ethical norms that underpin national and international laws. This thesis assesses the capacity of PSCs to behave according to ethical norms using criteria derived from leadership theories. And, finally, this thesis reaches a conclusion about society's ability to control PSCs based on an analysis (at different levels of decision-making authority within PSCs) of the impact of leadership on the ethical behaviour of contractors.

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(2010) and Higate (2012b) examine the impact of PSC regulatory regimes from a gendered perspective. Other authors have noted that psychological factors such as the underlying motivations of contractors are more important than regulation (Dunigan, 2011; Machairas, 2014; Pattison, 2008, 2010, 2014).

<sup>221</sup> (Franke & Von Boemcken, 2011; Higate, 2012a, 2012b)

<sup>222</sup> (Schulz & Yeung, 2008, p. 10; Vrdoljak, 2010, p. 297)



## Chapter Three: Methodology

This chapter explains the theoretical and methodological frameworks that underpin this thesis. It then details the research design by explaining its sampling procedures, participant selection criteria, interview procedures, instrumentation, and data analyses procedures. The data analysis procedures are divided into three phases of coding: initial, focused, and theoretical. Each coding phase is explained in detail with some examples given to demonstrate how key coding processes were executed. The validity and reliability of both the instrumentation and coding procedures are also discussed in this section. This section closes by acknowledging limitations of the research that stem from the methodology, design, instrumentation, sampling procedures, and data analysis techniques that were employed.

### Theoretical and Methodological Frameworks

The aim of this thesis is to identify and analyse leadership's impact on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. Leadership and ethics are two themes that are highly contextual and can be difficult to quantify in numerical terms. Conceptions of leadership, for example, are subjective according to whether one views leadership as an attributional, stylistic, or processual phenomenon. Conceptions of ethics are subjective according to individual and situation-specific variables.<sup>223</sup> This thesis therefore adopts an interpretivist theoretical framework as the most suitable framework for exploring leadership and ethics. An interpretivist theoretical framework accounts for different conceptions by emphasizing the impact of social context on meaning during qualitative data analyses.<sup>224</sup>

It is noteworthy that both positivist and critical theoretical frameworks were also considered as guides for the research underlying this thesis;<sup>225</sup> but they were not selected due to their poor fit with the thesis's objectives. Positivist research seeks "precise empirical observations" that can be difficult to validate when discussing subjective matters with research participants.<sup>226</sup> This thesis explores two subjective subjects: leadership and ethics.

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<sup>223</sup> Peoples' biases and perceptions of themselves affect their perceptions of others (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992); bias and perception must be considered when analysing data.

<sup>224</sup> Weber (1978, p. 9, para. 6) outlines the definition of "meaning" and culminates his thoughts by stating: "understanding involves the interpretive grasp of the meaning present in...context."

<sup>225</sup> "The main qualitative paradigmatic choices are positivist (driven by theory), interpretivist (driven by the views of those in the study setting), and critical (shaped by the belief that individual behaviours are the result of structural inequities)" (Schensul, 2012, p. 69)

<sup>226</sup> (Neuman, 2003, p. 70)

Furthermore, positivist research is validated by way of “traditional...scientific standards of rigor” and is considered valid or invalid in large part according to the reliability of the instruments used.<sup>227</sup> This thesis analyses qualitative data gleaned through the analysis of textual information. It can be difficult to precisely state the reliability of qualitative data collection instruments. Critical research acknowledges social context and attributed meanings; however critical research seeks to frame current phenomena with respect to historical events and precedents. The end-state of a critical research project is that some significant change should be suggested or instituted.<sup>228</sup> This thesis does not seek to establish or defend a normative position on PSCs but rather to contribute information that helps to explain leadership’s impact on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. Interpretivism provides a theoretical framework that assists in achieving this thesis’ goal.

Interpretivism encompasses many methodologies including hermeneutics, ethnomethodology, phenomenology, and grounded theory (GT).<sup>229</sup> Of these methodologies, a GT approach appeared to offer the best chance of yielding new and reliable information because (as explained the following paragraph) GT is a flexible methodology designed to explore social phenomena in areas where little research exists. Hermeneutic research explores social phenomena and it accounts for the intentions that lie behind peoples’ actions, but it does not emphasize the discovery of why people ‘intend’ as they do.<sup>230</sup> Ethnomethodologies have the potential to generate very detailed datasets but typically require researchers to spend significant amounts of time embedded in the culture they are studying.<sup>231</sup> Phenomenology seeks to relate perceived ‘realities’ to “the variety of thoughts and ideas [a person] may have about reality;”<sup>232</sup> however this methodology also calls for extended time and interaction with a select few individuals.<sup>233</sup> Conducting the research underlying this thesis using no methodology at all seemed inappropriate due to the increased likelihood that data would be interpreted illogically or that others would not be able to be “critique, repeat, or adapt” the findings of this thesis.<sup>234</sup>

Unlike the previously mentioned interpretivist methodologies, GT research is designed to create new theory rather than to apply or test existing theories. The review of literature

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<sup>227</sup> (Andrew & Halcomb, 2009, p. 123)

<sup>228</sup> (Neuman, 2003, p. 81)

<sup>229</sup> (Neuman, 2003, p. 76)

<sup>230</sup> (Moustakas, 1994, pp. 8–11)

<sup>231</sup> (Creswell, 2009, p. 58)

<sup>232</sup> (Spinelli, 1989, p. 28)

<sup>233</sup> (Giorgi, 1985, pp. 8–22)

<sup>234</sup> (Schensul, 2012, p. 71)

determined that research has not yet been conducted on the subject of leadership skills and behaviours within PSCs. Although a great deal of research has been conducted on leadership and ethics within organizations similar to PSCs, existing research has thus far failed to yield conclusive results: no theories regarding leadership and/or ethics appear to encompass every context or appear to have the universal acceptance of researchers and practitioners. It is therefore not unreasonable to research leadership and ethics within PSCs from a fresh perspective. Because GT has no “particular commitment to specific kinds of data, lines of research, or theoretical interests,” GT research designs can be tailored to fit a variety of purposes and research questions.<sup>235</sup> GT’s emphasis on new discoveries “in areas where little is already known” makes GT a good fit for this thesis.<sup>236</sup> Additionally, in comparison to other interpretivist methodologies, “one of the strengths of [GT] is that it explains what is actually happening in practical life at a particular time, rather than describing what should be going on.”<sup>237</sup> This improved the chances that this thesis would be able to contribute new information to contemporary PSC debates.

Grounded theories are specific to phenomena and can be derived by way of constructivist (Interpretivistic) or objectivist (Positivistic) research designs.<sup>238</sup> Charmaz’s constructivist GT is an interpretivist methodology selected as this thesis’s methodological framework for the following reasons.<sup>239</sup> Constructivist GT adheres to the philosophical underpinnings of social constructivism, a philosophy that is closely linked to interpretivism and to Vygotsky’s Social Development Theory (SDT). SDT asserts that cultural and social contexts are important to cognition and generating new ideas. Vygotsky outlines how social interactions, including speech and “more knowledgeable others,” are required to progress peoples’ mental and problem-solving abilities.<sup>240</sup> Similarly, this thesis asserts that cultural and social contexts must be considered when analysing leadership and ethical data. Discussion (speech) and the comparative advantages in knowledge between the researcher and research participants (“more knowledgeable others”) are used to create defensible explanations of phenomena (meaning). *Constructivist* GT is, therefore, specifically a good fit because it acknowledges that data and theories represent subjective interpretations of reality that are influenced by both the researcher and research participants. The researcher’s own experiences within the private security industry posed challenges to bracketing and could be seen as a source of bias: the

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<sup>235</sup> (Strauss, 1987, p. 5)

<sup>236</sup> (Goulding, 1999, p. 6)

<sup>237</sup> (McCallin, 2003, p. 203)

<sup>238</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 129–131)

<sup>239</sup> (Charmaz, 2006)

<sup>240</sup> (Vygotskiĭ, 1978, p. 57)

researcher spent two years working within an armed private security company before conducting the research underlying this thesis. However, in constructivist GT research, social context and meaning are jointly ‘constructed’ by researchers and research participants. Constructivist GT calls for only a modicum of bracketing insofar as researchers are expected to evolve interpretations and meanings as interviews progress. The practical impact of the researcher’s experience in the private security industry on this research’s design, procedures, and findings is discussed in further detail in the section below entitled *Reflexivity in the Research Design, Procedures, and Findings*.

Finally, the theoretical and methodological frameworks selected for the research underlying this thesis have demonstrated their suitability in previous studies addressing similar thesis questions. GT has been used to research perceptions of leadership within geographically-dispersed, high-performing, consulting teams,<sup>241</sup> perceptions of high-quality leadership programmes,<sup>242</sup> the use of leadership to overcome resistance to change,<sup>243</sup> and the influence of organizational design on leadership and decision-making.<sup>244</sup> Historically, leadership studies have focused on the actions and behaviours of formally appointed leaders while generally neglecting leadership processes. Parry asserts that because GT is focused on generating new theory rather than testing existing theories, it could be ideal for revealing the nature of leadership processes –something existing leadership theories have thus far failed to reveal.<sup>245</sup> By employing a GT methodology, the research underlying this thesis could help to determine what processes lie behind the observable leadership behaviours identified by many mainstream qualitative studies.<sup>246</sup>

It is noteworthy that, while GT research is designed to create new theory rather than to apply or test existing theories, this thesis seeks only to provide new information that could be useful to the future development of a new, substantive theory. GT researchers define a “substantive theory” as one that “explains phenomena within specific contexts.”<sup>247</sup> A substantive theory is differentiable from a “formal theory,” which “explains phenomena across a range of contexts”<sup>248</sup> While a strict interpretation of the definitions accepted by GT might make it possible for this thesis to develop a substantive theory, the resource and time

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<sup>241</sup> (Cash-Baskett, 2011)

<sup>242</sup> (Eich, 2008)

<sup>243</sup> (Kan & Parry, 2004)

<sup>244</sup> (Rowland & Parry, 2009)

<sup>245</sup> (Parry, 1998b)

<sup>246</sup> “[GT] aims at identifying processes of forces that give rise to activity” (Hunt & Ropo, 1995, p. 381)

<sup>247</sup> (Glaser, 2007, pp. 97–98)

<sup>248</sup> (Glaser, 2007, pp. 98–99)

limitations inherent to the scope of a PhD thesis would cause the validity and reliability of such a theory to be limited to the research sample population. The value of a substantive theory generated by this thesis would be limited to the point that it is more practical for this thesis to seek to simply ‘provide new information.’

### Thesis Questions

This thesis identifies and analyses leadership’s impact on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel in order to use leadership theories to inform debates about civil society’s ability to control PSCs. Its central thesis question is: “to what extent do leadership skills and behaviours influence the ethical behaviour of British PSC personnel in hostile environments?” Dunican states that, in a GT study, a researcher seeks to explore how and why phenomena occur.<sup>249</sup> Accordingly, three sub-questions have been posited to ensure that this thesis goes beyond simple description and culminates in new information that could assist in the creation of a theory explaining how and why leadership influences the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel:<sup>250</sup>

- 1) What are the drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments?
- 2) Which leadership skills and behaviours affect those drivers of ethical behaviour?
- 3) What is the magnitude of leadership’s impact on the drivers of ethical behaviour?

The thesis sub-questions allow this thesis to determine three things integral to answering the central thesis question. Sub-question (1) seeks to determine the perceived relative importance of ethics within the private security industry. This information is pertinent to addressing critical concerns about the ethical dispositions of PSC personnel.<sup>251</sup> Sub-question (2) seeks to determine the extent to which leadership theories might be useful for informing debates. This information is pertinent to understanding exactly which aspects of leadership are important within PSCs. This is important because research has not yet established that any particular leadership traits, skills, or behaviours are universally necessary for effective leadership. At best, some research has established that particular traits, skills, and behaviours

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<sup>249</sup> “The net outcome of GT research is a theory that contains a central phenomenon, its causal conditions, its intervening conditions and its consequences” (Dunican, 2005, p. 256).

<sup>250</sup> Theories generated via GT research are “more than a set of findings; [they offer] an explanation about phenomena.” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 22)

<sup>251</sup> (Krahmann, 2008, pp. 259–260).

are *factors* of effective leadership and the perceived success of military<sup>252</sup> and commercial organizations.<sup>253</sup> Finally, sub-question (3) seeks to determine the degree of emphasis PSC personnel should place on leadership to elicit ethical behaviour. This information is pertinent to addressing critical concerns about the limitations of regulatory efforts and other control mechanisms.<sup>254</sup>

## Research Design

This thesis explores perceptions of leadership and ethics. Leadership and ethics are both subjects that are qualitative in nature. This thesis also explores leadership's impact on ethics within PSCs. A significant body of literature on the subject of leadership within PSCs does not exist making it impossible to collect contextualized data from sources other than people with personal experience of the phenomenon. It was therefore essential for the research underlying this thesis to collect new, qualitative data in order to perform qualitative analyses.<sup>255</sup>

The following sections describe how first-person, qualitative data gathered through purposive and theoretical sampling was used to inform the research. The terms purposive and theoretical sampling are often used synonymously;<sup>256</sup> however, this thesis distinguishes between the two types of sampling according to Coyne and Glaser.<sup>257</sup> Purposive sampling requires researchers to select research participants according to the likelihood that they will reveal a great deal of information about the subject being examined. Theoretical sampling requires researchers to select research participants according to the likelihood that they will reveal new information, different from the information that has already been collected. Exploratory interviewing was used to collect data because it is an effective way of collecting qualitative information on inherently personal subjects such as perceptions of leadership and ethics.<sup>258</sup> Interviews were coded according to the coding techniques and process prescribed

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<sup>252</sup> (Benest, 2007, p. 11, 2012; UK Ministry of Defence, 2004, p. 23; Yukl & Van Fleet, 1982, p. 100)

<sup>253</sup> (Bass, 2008 *Ch. 5*; Judge et al., 2002, p. 766, *Table 1*; Kouzes & Posner, 2010a)

<sup>254</sup> (Ralby et al., 2011, p. 6)

<sup>255</sup> (Glaser, 1992, p. 12); "Qualitative research and analysis give the intricate, most relevant and problematic details of the phenomenon. It is a basic research approach in a new area to do the qualitative research and analysis first..."

<sup>256</sup> (Coyne, 1997; Tuckett, 2004, p. 53)

<sup>257</sup> (Coyne, 1997, p. 624; Glaser, 1978, p. 37)

<sup>258</sup> (Oppenheim, 1992, pp. 66–67)

by Charmaz.<sup>259</sup> New information resulting from analyses was used to answer the thesis's central question.

### Reflexivity in the Research Design, Procedures, and Findings

Before discussing the sampling procedures, participant selection, interview procedures, instrumentation, and data analysis procedures of the research underlying this thesis in detail, it is important to note that the two years that the researcher spent as a project-level leader in the private security industry may have had a practical, positive, impact on conduct of this research. Higate and Cameron discuss the benefits of the autoethnographic methodology, reflexivity, and researchers "writing themselves in" to their own research.<sup>260</sup> Surrendering one's self to the assumption that "the values of researchers can never be eradicated from their work and no amount of methodological technique or declarations of bias can strip them of their theoretical presuppositions"<sup>261</sup> has the benefit of acknowledging, and perhaps even constructively leveraging, one's personal motivations and biases. In this thesis, however, the researcher chose to bracket himself out of the research process (to the maximum extent possible) in an attempt to minimize the risk of personal biases contaminating conclusions.<sup>262</sup> The following paragraphs in this section describe ways in which the researcher's background may have had a positive, negative or neutral impact on the outcome of the research, despite the modicum of bracketing techniques that were used.

First, as briefly noted in Chapter One: *Introduction*, this research's focus on British PSCs stemmed, in part, from 'the limited resources inherent to PhD research'. Limited time and funding made it difficult to access foreign PSCs headquartered in other parts of the world. However, the researcher's geographic location and industry knowledge allowed for relatively immediate access to British PSCs; especially those headquartered in the vicinity of London. Given the relative shortage of research focused on British PSCs, limiting the scope of this research to the British industry seemed to be a good way to capitalize on the researcher's background whilst still contributing new information to the body of knowledge.

The researcher's previous employment in the industry had no discernible effect on the sampling procedures. 16 separate British PSCs were sent "Gatekeeper Approach Letters"<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> (Charmaz, 2006)

<sup>260</sup> (Higate & Cameron, 2006)

<sup>261</sup> (Hardy, Phillips, & Clegg, 2001, p. 534)

<sup>262</sup> (Charmaz, 2006)

<sup>263</sup> See: Appendix A: Gatekeeper Approach Letters

and these letters gave no indication of the researcher's previous employment in the industry. Any researcher without previous industry employment experience would be equally capable of reaching out to the same British PSCs. However, the researcher's industry experience might have influenced the four PSCs that responded to the Gatekeeper Approach Letters to subsequently decide to participate in the research. Upon receiving responses from the four interested PSCs, the researcher met with their representatives and stated up-front that he had worked in the British private security industry before.<sup>264</sup> The researcher's previous employment experience enabled him to demonstrate a professional level of knowledge about the industry which may have encouraged the PSCs to participate. Although, the four PSCs had already exhibited an initial interest in the research, the researcher might have had an advantage over other researchers without previous industry employment experience in terms of rapport and credibility.

The researcher's previous employment in the industry did have some affect on the participant selection process. Approximately three years prior to conducting the research underlying this thesis, the researcher had some professional contact with three out of 24 (12.5%) of the research participants. Previous professional contact appeared to motivate these three participants to deliver more-prompt responses to interview invitations and to be more flexible in scheduling interview discussions. These participants also seemed to ask fewer questions about confidentiality and anonymity than other participants, suggesting a heightened level of trust and understanding based on the previous professional contact. Additionally, two qualified participants declined to participate in the research due to their previous professional contact with the researcher.

It is reasonable to believe that the researcher's previous industry experience had a negligible impact on the data that was elicited during interviews. Participants were able to use many acronyms and industry jargon without disrupting the flow of conversation to provide lengthy explanations. The following excerpt contains several colloquial industry terms:

But for the mainstream, the same people who work in security are the same people who work in [military] PSDs protecting civilians. [laugh] You get a group of guys together; everyone is wearing combats, vests, and wearing camouflage with Blackhawk gear and running around with your M4 rifle and bits and pieces hanging off your belt.<sup>265</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> The researcher's employment history was also available as public knowledge via a CV and personal profile posted on [www.Linkedin.com](http://www.Linkedin.com).

<sup>265</sup> (Interview #1)



It was unnecessary for the participant to stop to define the organizational structure, size, and capabilities of PSDs (“Personal Security Details”) and/or to define “combats”, “vests”, “Blackhawk gear” and “M4 rifles” (military style clothing and equipment) to the researcher; thus potentially increasing the amount of data that was collected in short periods of time. However, with good rapport-building skills, flexible interview schedules, and adequate preparation, other researchers without previous experience in the industry would be equally capable of eliciting similar information. It could be argued that there is always a risk of interviewers misunderstanding participant responses. Prior experience in the industry might cause researchers to assume common usage of terms when participants have actually ascribed different meanings to terms. As described in the section below entitled *Limits of the Instrumentation*, the researcher sought to mitigate this risk by using “reflexivity” to help ensure that participants’ use of terms was accurately understood.<sup>266</sup>

Additionally, the university’s ethical approval for the research underlying this thesis was granted on the condition that participants would limit discussions of potentially illegal ethical infractions. In the explanation of the interview process (described below in the section entitled *Interview Procedures*), all candidates, including those previously known to the researcher, were equally dissuaded from discussing illegal activities that might obligate the researcher to report information to authorities. Furthermore, all company names, personal names, locations, and dates were anonymized and all participants in the research were equally allowed to decline answering questions. The three participants who had previous professional contact with the researcher did not appear to answer questions differently than those participants who had no previous contact with the researcher. Finally, as discussed in the following section entitled *Sampling Procedures*, this research’s sample population was selected for diversity rather than representativeness. If some of the data from 12.5% of the sample population<sup>267</sup> was unduly influenced by prior contact, then the impact on the thesis would be limited to reducing the ‘scope’ rather than the ‘representativeness’ of the research’s findings.

Finally, in constructivist GT research, social context and meaning are jointly ‘constructed’ by researchers and research participants during the interview (data collection) process. The constructivist GT methodology requires researchers to evolve interpretations

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<sup>266</sup> Here, the term “reflexivity” is used according to Hall & Callery (2001, p. 264) to mean “examining how [the interviewer] and the participants [monitor] each other’s talk and [respond] to each other in interaction.”

<sup>267</sup> (3 of 24 participants = 12.5%)

and meanings as interviews progress; however, this does not mean that different researchers (with or without previous industry experience) should produce substantially different findings if they are using similar sample populations, instruments, and procedures. In constructivist GT research, researchers determine justifiable interpretations and meanings using three phases of coding and the constant comparative method (discussed in detail in the section entitled *Data Analysis Procedures*). Researchers ‘jointly construct’ social contexts and meanings with participants by using reflexivity during interviews to ensure a correct understanding of data and by gradually creating and evolving codes, categories, and themes as an increasing number of participants contribute new data. The ‘joint construction’ of meaning during constructivist GT research is limited, however. Although, data analysis procedures are influenced by researchers’ goals, rapport-building skills, interviewing skills, and coding skills, constructivist GT research does not allow researchers to presuppose meanings or independently interject their own perspectives into the data. All researchers, with or without previous industry experience, should, therefore, ‘jointly construct’ meanings with participants using similar techniques that result in substantively similar findings. To help ensure that researcher bias borne of previous industry experience did not unfairly influence the findings of this thesis, researcher triangulation was used to check the validity and reliability of the coding process (discussed in the section appropriately entitled below). A second researcher, trained in coding but with no experience or knowledge of the private security industry, produced very similar codes and themes.

In summary, it appears that the researcher’s previous industry experience was useful for quickly gathering data and more-readily understanding the narratives of the research participants. But it is also reasonable to believe that other researchers attempting to duplicate this research would produce similar findings if they used similar instruments and sampling, participant selection, interview and data analysis procedures.

### Sampling Procedures

The research underlying this thesis began with a purposive “sampling strategy aimed at phenomenal variation and then [proceeded] to theoretical sampling.”<sup>268</sup> This accepted GT participant selection strategy is very similar to non-proportional quota sampling. Patton and Cutcliffe suggest that it is normal to begin GT sampling with criterion or some form of

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<sup>268</sup> (Sandelowski, 1995, p. 182); Sandelowski addresses “criterion” sampling, which is a form of purposive sampling.

purposeful sampling “which is then superseded by theoretical sampling as the data/theory highlight the direction which further sampling needs to follow.”<sup>269</sup> To obtain sampling frames, corporate offices from British PSCs were provided with a “Gatekeeper Approach Letter” (*Appendix A*). The letter detailed the objectives and parameters of this thesis and encouraged PSCs to provide the researcher with access to a frame of qualified research participants.

Requests were sent to British PSCs asking for their assistance in providing sampling frames in the form of contact information for leaders who met the selection criteria. Non-probability, purposive sampling was done from within the provided sampling frames to facilitate theoretical saturation.<sup>270</sup> Due to labour mobility in the private security industry, sampling frames were assumed to be demographically similar to the PSC leader population. It is important to note that demographically similar samples do not yield data that is necessarily representative of the total population unless the sample size is sufficiently large. The sample population for the research underlying this thesis was not planned to be sufficiently large enough on its own to generate a robust, substantive theory. It was, however, expected that the ‘emergent’ sampling frames used in the research would require updating because some variables would be unknown during the initial and focused coding phases.<sup>271</sup> Patton notes that, as categories within GT research begin to saturate, sample frames can be changed to ensure that subsequent interviews are productive.<sup>272</sup> During theoretical sampling, information gained from initial research participants can be used to adjust the data collection strategy.<sup>273</sup> Participants from within the sampling frames were sent a “Research Information Sheet & Informed Consent Form” (*Appendix B*). In accordance with the ethical research guidelines required by King’s College London, recipients of this packet had the freedom to volunteer or decline participation.

An exact sample size could not be pre-determined for the research underlying this thesis because the GT methodology depends upon theoretical sampling to be effective. The adequacy of a theoretical sample is not judged on size but instead “on the basis of how widely and diversely the analyst chose his groups for saturating categories, according to the type of

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<sup>269</sup> (Cutcliffe, 2000, p. 1477; Patton, 2002, p. 238)

<sup>270</sup> “Theoretical Saturation” is reached when themes can be defined in terms of their “properties, dimensions, and variations” and further data collection continues to reveal the existence of the theme without revealing anything new about it (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 263).

<sup>271</sup> This research used sampling frames and so its sampling was not “fully emergent.”

<sup>272</sup> (Patton, 2002, p. 240)

<sup>273</sup> (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)

theory he wished to develop.”<sup>274</sup> Theoretical sampling continues to seek participants as long as there is a reasonable chance that new information might significantly contribute to the development of theory. GT studies similar to the research underlying this thesis suggested that theoretical saturation of a considerable number of categories could be reached within approximately 15 interviews.<sup>275</sup> To avoid Sandelowski’s concerns that, even in GT research, it is possible to have sample sizes too small to support conclusions, conducting fewer than 15 interviews was not considered.<sup>276</sup> However, the nature of theoretical sampling meant that there was a clear possibility that more than 15 interviews could be necessary. In the case of this thesis’s research, 24 interviews were conducted to achieve the necessary degree of breadth and diversity. This decision is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four: *Presentation of Findings*.

### Sample Pool and Participant Selection

The sample pool for this thesis’s research was made up of people who have both held leadership positions in British PSCs and participated in British PSC operations in hostile environments. Geographical circumstances limited this thesis’s research to recruiting PSC employees from London-based PSCs; however, many of the people in the sample pool worked worldwide and had little personal contact with the geographic area of London. Most people in the sample pool had also worked for multiple PSCs throughout their careers and thus the labour-mobility inherent to the industry was assumed to be sufficient to mitigate the threat of a ‘London bias. The sample pool appears to adequately include British PSCs from the whole of Great Britain. Two criteria were established in the initial stage of interviewing to “maximize the possibilities of obtaining data and leads for more data on the questions.”<sup>277</sup>

The first selection criterion was to have held a formal leadership position within a British PSC for at least one year. One year was assumed to be long enough for a participant to have settled into their leadership role such that they could speak about standards and status quos. While some researchers might consider one year a short amount of time, Churchill and Peter support erring on the side of more-inclusive participant selection criteria, asserting that sampling characteristics have less impact on the reliability of studies than measure

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<sup>274</sup> (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 63). GT does not aim to generalize research findings to a broader population, minimizing the importance of size. It is the “representativeness of concepts, not of persons, [that] is crucial” (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 9).

<sup>275</sup> (Cash-Baskett, 2011) n = 10; (Eich, 2008) n > 15; (Kan & Parry, 2004) n = 22 (semi-structured interviews)

<sup>276</sup> (Sandelowski, 1995, p. 179)

<sup>277</sup> (Glaser, 1978, p. 45)

characteristics.<sup>278</sup> The inclusiveness of this study's sample selection criteria provided an opportunity for data analyses to partially determine if or how independent variables (branch of military service, time spent in hostile environments, etc.) affected participants' responses.

Formal leadership positions were categorized according to the levels of decision-making authority that Kinsey identified as being integral to the major types of PSC hierarchies.<sup>279</sup> In descending order, those were: [corporate-level] senior leaders, regional- or project-level leaders, and supervisor or team leaders. Selecting participants "from a range of levels in the hierarchy [and] a range of functional areas" constitutes stratified, heterogeneity sampling which encourages diversity in collected data and expedites theoretical sampling.<sup>280</sup> The research underlying this thesis sought a similar number of participants from each decision-making level.

This thesis's research used the BAPSC and the SCEG (ADS) websites to verify that PSCs were British and it used PSCs' websites or direct contact with PSCs' operations departments to verify that the PSCs conduct operations in hostile environments. Although gender was not a criterion, the overwhelming majority of PSC personnel in hostile environments are male.<sup>281</sup> It was not reasonable to expect that female participants would be accessible at the project level or below.

The second selection criterion was that participants had to have the ability and willingness to speak about their leadership experiences "reasonably articulately."<sup>282</sup> Useful qualitative data gathered from personal interviews depends on participants giving "detailed, focused, and full" accounts.<sup>283</sup> A potential participant's ability and willingness to articulate his experiences was determined during initial contact. Respondents who could not offer complete or detailed responses were considered unsuitable and not pursued.

### Interview Procedures

This section describes the procedures that were developed and adhered to, to ensure that interviews collected data in a controlled, uniform, and ethical manner. This section explains

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<sup>278</sup> (Churchill & Peter, 1984, p. 369) The GT research of Cash-Baskett (2011, p. 66) also uses 'one year' as a selection criterion.

<sup>279</sup> (Kinsey, 2005b, pp. 193, 196)

<sup>280</sup> (Parry, 1998b, p. 93); Parry's sampling method is very similar to and compatible with Sandelowski's (1995, p. 182) sampling method described in the previous section.

<sup>281</sup> (Schulz & Yeung, 2008, p. 4)

<sup>282</sup> Willig (2007, p. 211) discusses "reasonably articulate" as a selection criterion important during interviews for phenomenological research but the criterion could also pertain to other methodologies.

<sup>283</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, p. 14)

its usage of pilot interviews, the Interview Guide approach, a plan for integrating interviews and analyses, and a checklist of steps that were followed for each interview.

Before contacting and interviewing actual participants, pilot tests of interviews were conducted on three people with characteristics similar to members of the sample pool.<sup>284</sup> Pilot testing ensured that the interview questions comprising the interview guide were understandable and that the transcription plan was workable. Following the pilot tests, questions in the interview guide were adjusted as necessary to improve their clarity. The ‘adjusted’ questions of the interview guide are discussed in detail in the following section entitled *Instrumentation* as well as being shown in *Appendix C*.

Participants were interviewed using the “Interview Guide” approach. The “Interview Guide approach” prescribes a set of core questions to partially reduce interviewer effects and bias by “[ensuring] that the same basic lines of inquiry [are] pursued with each person interviewed.”<sup>285</sup> This approach allows researchers the flexibility to adapt interviews to “particular individuals and circumstances” and to explore new directions to achieve the goal of theoretical saturation. The Interview Guide approach facilitates only semi-structured (non-standardized) interviews. Core questions written into interview guides ensure some degree of comparability between participant responses and they reduce interviewer effects and bias; however, the interviewer is allowed to deviate from the prescribed list of questions to pursue developing areas of interest.<sup>286</sup>

Interviews were integrated into analyses via constant comparative analysis. ‘Constant comparative analyses’ began upon the third interview and subsequent “interviews and observations [were] informed by analytic questions and hypotheses about categories and their relationships.”<sup>287</sup> Allowing past interviews to inform and shape subsequent interviews is a key mechanism for ensuring that GT research has breadth and uncovers the full range of information inherent to a new subject. Participants were interviewed in-person whenever circumstances permitted, however PSC leaders at regional, project, and team levels, were often located in foreign countries (hostile environments) around the world. Geographically distant leaders were interviewed “face-to-face” via Skype video-conferencing software. Telephone interviewing was directly compared with face-to-face interviewing: telephone

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<sup>284</sup> (Champ & Boyle, 2003, p. 88)

<sup>285</sup> (Patton, 2002, pp. 343–344). Cash-Baskett (2011), Kan & Parry (2004), and Eich (2008) are exemplary leadership researchers who used adaptations of Patton’s Interview Guide approach to collect data during GT studies.

<sup>286</sup> (Patton, 2002, p. 349)

<sup>287</sup> (Strauss, 1987, pp. 26–27)

interviews increase accessibility and perceptions of anonymity, but telephone interviews also decrease researchers' abilities to establish rapport, receive visual cues, and interpret non-verbal communication.<sup>288</sup> Skype video-conferencing software was assumed to offer accessibility while maintaining some of the rapport-building and non-verbal communication advantages that stem from visual contact.

Finally, the following checklist outlines the steps that were used to ensure that ethical guidelines were followed and that data was accurately recorded:

- 1) Invitations to participate in the research were distributed to sample frames through British PSCs supporting this research. When advised by a supporting PSC, the researcher sent a personal invitation to qualified members of the sample frame to encourage greater participation. As specific leaders agreed to participate, meeting times were established via email. In the same email, informed consent forms and research information sheets (*Appendix B*) were distributed.
- 2) One day before the meeting, participants were sent reminders to ensure that the meeting could still take place. Webcam and audio recording equipment were tested.
- 3) At the start of each interview, participants were greeted to establish rapport<sup>289</sup> and then briefed on the interview process. During the greeting, the researcher introduced himself and informed participants of his prior employment in the private security industry. The purpose and goals of the study, the definitions of ethics and leadership being used by the study, confidentiality procedures, and the participants' rights were reiterated. Participants were reminded that the conversation was being recorded and they were asked if there are any specific time limits that need to be observed.
- 4) Each interview was designed to last between 45 and 60 minutes. Initial interviews were conducted in accordance with the Interview Guide (*Appendix C*); however, this research avoided being "locked into...original concepts," by acknowledging that it could deviate from the Interview Guide if it was producing "irrelevant" data.<sup>290</sup> The researcher summarized participant responses during interviews to improve accuracy.<sup>291</sup>
- 5) At the close of each interview, participants were asked if there was anything that they would like to add that might facilitate a better understanding of any of the topics

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<sup>288</sup> (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004, p. 116)

<sup>289</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, p. 19; Patton, 2002, p. 365)

<sup>290</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, p. 17)

<sup>291</sup> (Giske & Artinian, 2007, p. 71)

under investigation. Participants were encouraged to send a follow-up email if any new thoughts about interview questions came to mind and they were thanked for their time.

- 6) Audio recordings of interviews were transcribed as soon as possible. Transcripts were anonymized through the deletion of all personnel names, company names, times, dates, and locations. Anonymized transcripts were returned to participants for final verification. Upon verification, transcripts were analysed.
- 7) After all analysis was complete and a final draft of the thesis was written, a 27-page summary of this thesis's research and its findings (consisting mostly of *Chapter Five*, edited for relevancy) was distributed to participants. Other parts of the thesis including the methodology, calculations, and discussion of the impact of the findings on critical arguments were offered to participants upon their requests. Participants were encouraged to comment on the final draft before publication. This facilitated participant validation and allowed participants a final opportunity to approve their participation in the research project.

### Instrumentation

The "Interview Guide" consisted of open-ended and critical incident questions. (*Appendix C*) Open-ended questions allowed respondents to communicate their own perceptions of phenomena with less danger of the researcher pre-determining categories and perceptions.<sup>292</sup> Critical incident questions allowed respondents to use major events to exemplify or illustrate important points. A critical incident is a "self-contained descriptive unit of analysis" from which data can be extracted.<sup>293</sup> Critical incident questions allowed data to be exemplified and contextualized in story form. 'Hidden' data points can often be mined from critical incident questions because, during the process of story-telling, respondents reveal information that they might not have consciously thought to reveal.

To mitigate misunderstandings that might have occurred due to variations in respondents' personal interpretations of the term "leadership," questions did not address leadership directly. Instead, interview questions were designed to collect data according to the sub-components of the definition of leadership supported by the review of literature. Parry notes that respondents should be "interview[ed] in depth about concepts which are subordinate to

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<sup>292</sup> (Patton, 2002, p. 21)

<sup>293</sup> (Patton, 2002, pp. 236–238, 439); asking critical incident questions is also known as 'critical case sampling'



the overarching concept of leadership... [and]... have been confirmed in the extant literature as being closely associated with it.”<sup>294</sup> Addressing leadership indirectly allowed this thesis to go beyond identifying what leaders ‘do’ and to understand the processes underlying leadership. It also helped to prevent the researcher’s preconceived notions of leadership from influencing respondents’ answers.

### Validity and Reliability of Instrumentation

This section describes the process that was used to construct the primary data collection instrument used during the research project: the semi-structured interview guide. After providing a brief explanation of the purpose of each of the core questions in the interview guide, this section closes with a discussion of the measures that were taken to improve the validity and reliability of the instrument.

The interview guide was constructed according to the suggestions of Bryman et al., Flanagan, Parry, and Brod et al.<sup>295</sup> These authors suggested techniques for constructing data collection instruments for qualitative and GT research on leadership. Their suggestions helped to maximize measures of the interview guide’s validity, accuracy, precision, and reliability. To be clear, this thesis accepts the following definitions for validity, accuracy, precision, and reliability: “Validity” is the degree to which an instrument measures what it is designed to measure: if an instrument is designed to measure behaviour, then does it measure behaviour and not something else, like skills? “Accuracy” describes how representative an instrument’s score is of the actual score of what is being measured: if a behaviour is “extreme,” then does the instrument record “extreme?” “Precision” is the “delicacy of the measurement scale employed:” does the instrument, for example, measure according to a 3-, 5-, or 10-point scale? “Reliability” is “the ability of an instrument [to consistently] produce valid scores:” does the instrument attribute the same score to the same phenomenon measure after measure?<sup>296</sup>

The following chart shows how each of the interview guide’s core questions contributed to answering the thesis’s three sub-questions. The core questions are not shown in order so that they can be grouped in a meaningful way. The chart is followed by an explanation of

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<sup>294</sup> (Parry, 1998b, p. 93)

<sup>295</sup> (Brod, Tesler, & Christensen, 2009, p. 1267; Bryman, Bresnen, Beardsworth, & Keil, 1988, p. 19; Flanagan, 1954, pp. 22, 25, 29; Parry, 1998b, p. 95)

<sup>296</sup> (Hammersley, 1987, pp. 77–78; Malhotra & Birks, 2006, pp. 313–315)

how the interview guide questions were phrased to ensure that the instrument was valid and reliable.

Q #	Core Interview Guide Questions	Contribution	Thesis Sub-Question	References
1	[OE] Please describe your role and primary responsibilities?	• Identifies (IDs) how leaders perceive their and others' personal responsibilities	(1) What are the drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments?	• Q 1, 2 ,5, 6: (Parry, 1998, p.95)
2	[OE] What are the critical tasks or concerns that seem to require the most attention?			
5	[OE] How much importance do your leaders seem to assign to ethical behaviour?	• IDs how leaders perceive others' understandings of responsibilities		• Q 5, 6: (Brod et al, 2009, p.1267)
6	[OE] Which practices or policies (if any) most clearly reveal the priority that a company (or leader) places on ethical behaviour?			
3	[OE] In your experience, what are the most common ethical challenges inherent to operating in a hostile environment?	• IDs negative pressures on ethical behaviour		• Q 3, 10, 7: (Brod et al., 2009, p.1267)
10	[OE] Are there any people or pressures that detract from your ability to make ethical decisions / act ethically?			
7	[OE] Is there anything that you (or others) can do to create or prevent ethical dilemmas for subordinate employees?	• IDs positive pressures on ethical behaviour		
4	[OE] Have ethical challenges changed as you've moved to new positions or companies?	• IDs past vs. current pressures (time)		• Q 4 (Brod et al., 2009, p.1267)
9	[OE] What people, codes, rules, or training do you find most helpful when you are faced with solving an ethical problem?	• IDs specific leadership skills and behaviours that affect the drivers of ethical behaviour	(2) Which leadership skills and behaviours affect those drivers?	• Q 9, 11, 12: (Parry, 1998, p.95)
11	[CI] What training or knowledge did you possess that helped you to influence other people involved in the situation?			
12	[CI] What actions did you take (or could you have taken) to prevent the situation or to influence other people involved?			
8	[OE] Whose actions (yours or others') ultimately have the most impact when it comes to ensuring the ethical behaviour of contractors in hostile environments?	• IDs the magnitude of leadership's impact on the drivers of ethical behaviour	(3) What is the magnitude of leadership's impact on those drivers?	• Q 8: (Brod et al., 2009, p.1267)

Most of the interview questions (Q1-10) were Open-Ended (OE) questions designed to “maximize the chance of learning [leaders’] points of view.”<sup>297</sup> A smaller number of the interview questions (Q11-12) were Critical Incident (CI) questions, which are more demanding of respondents in that they require respondents to recall specific, exemplary, personal experiences.<sup>298</sup> This thesis’s questions were phrased “to investigate the implicit

<sup>297</sup> (Bryman et al., 1988, p. 19); Bryman et al.’s suggestions were found to be particularly applicable to this research because the research example that they put forward is oriented specifically towards leadership over contractors and sub-contractors.

<sup>298</sup> Critical Incident (CI) questions are particularly useful for studying combat leadership (p. 29), for preparing “[statements] of typical requirements...for evaluating the typical performance of people engaged in [an] activity” (p. 22), and for establishing training requirements (p. 25) (Flanagan, 1954).

[leadership] theories of participants” in order to “help give an indication of the values that they hold dear.”<sup>299</sup> All of the interview questions included in this interview guide were formulated according to the suggestions of the interview experts referenced in the chart above. This helped to ensure that the sum of the questions (and the sum of the interviews) would lead to information that could be considered valid, accurate, precise, and reliable.

Questions #1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 11, and 12 meet Parry’s requirement for achieving “360 degree research” by exploring how leaders view their own leadership styles and behaviours and how leaders perceive others’ understandings of leadership.<sup>300</sup> Questions #5, 6, and 8 meet Brod et al.’s requirement to understand the importance of a given impact. Questions #3, 7, and 10 follow Brod et al.’s suggestions for identifying “factors (modifiers) that may either facilitate or hinder relationships” between participants and the phenomenon being examined. Finally, question #4 meets Brod et al.’s requirement to “include queries that help identify...appropriate recall period[s].”<sup>301</sup>

After creating the data collection instrument, several measures were taken to improve its validity and reliability. To partially substantiate the validity of the data collection instrument itself (the Interview Guide), the research underlying this thesis conducted a ‘content validity check.’ This check consists of an independent reviewer conducting a visual check to ensure that the interview guide “adequately [covers] the entire domain of the construct being measured.”<sup>302</sup> Validity was further substantiated by adhering to the suggestions of Brod et al. who assert that the validity of a data collection instrument is related to how the instrument is used.<sup>303</sup> Brod et al. cite some principles of GT and suggest that qualitative research should entail “direct communication” with people who have first-hand experience with the phenomenon under examination. This thesis’s research used individual interviews with PSC leaders “to adequately capture their perspective on issues of importance relative to the focus of” leadership and ethics within PSCs.<sup>304</sup> The validity of the interview guide was further supported by several authors who assert that the criterion of “fit” is the most important factor for evaluating validity.<sup>305</sup> In GT research, “fit” is defined as the degree to which the research’s resultant theory is grounded in the data. The constant comparison method facilitated “fit” by ensuring that theories borne from the interview instrument were supported

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<sup>299</sup> (Parry, 1998a, p. 94)

<sup>300</sup> (Parry, 1998a, p. 95)

<sup>301</sup> (Brod et al., 2009, p. 1267)

<sup>302</sup> (Malhotra & Birks, 2006, p. 314).

<sup>303</sup> (Brod et al., 2009)

<sup>304</sup> (Brod et al., 2009, pp. 1263, 1265)

<sup>305</sup> (Giske & Artinian, 2007, p. 69; Lomborg & Kirkevold, 2003, p. 199)

by data. This interview instrument could thus be considered valid insofar as it yielded “fitting” results.

Finally, the reliability of the interview instrument was improved through pilot testing the interview questions. Pilot testing an instrument allows researchers to identify and mitigate sources of measurement error that could affect reliability.<sup>306</sup> Common sources of measurement error in survey or interview instruments include different interpretations that participants may have of the questions being asked; or different environmental factors such as the amount of time that participants require to answer questions. This interview instrument was applied to conversations with two former PSC leaders who met the sampling criteria but did not want the content of their answers recorded or analysed for the purpose of research. Pilot tests gave the researcher an opportunity to revise questions that could be interpreted differently by different people and to get a better estimate of how much time interview participants needed to answer questions. The validity and reliability of the coding process used on the data collected by this instrument is discussed separately in Chapter Four: *Presentation of Findings*.

#### Data Analysis Procedures (Initial, Focused, and Theoretical Coding Phases)

In GT research, data collection and data analysis occur simultaneously.<sup>307</sup> This thesis’s research used Charmaz’s multi-levelled coding technique to facilitate data analysis: memo-writing, coding, and the constant comparative method. Charmaz’s prescribed technique sequentially categorizes and condenses data until the most salient points can be used to formulate a substantive theory. Charmaz’s technique fits well with the constant comparative method in that its multiple levels of coding reveal patterns and themes within interviews that can later be compared to patterns and themes from previous interviews. During interviews, memos were written to highlight key information that merited later attention. Memo-writing records abstract ideas and physical observations that will not be apparent in the transcribed data. All GT theorists have prescribed this technique to help researchers interpret and categorize abstract ideas.<sup>308</sup> Between and after interviews, three levels of coding<sup>309</sup> were conducted: initial coding, focused coding, and theoretical coding. Analyses in the research

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<sup>306</sup> (Winterstein & Kimberlin, 2008, p. 2277)

<sup>307</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, p. 20)

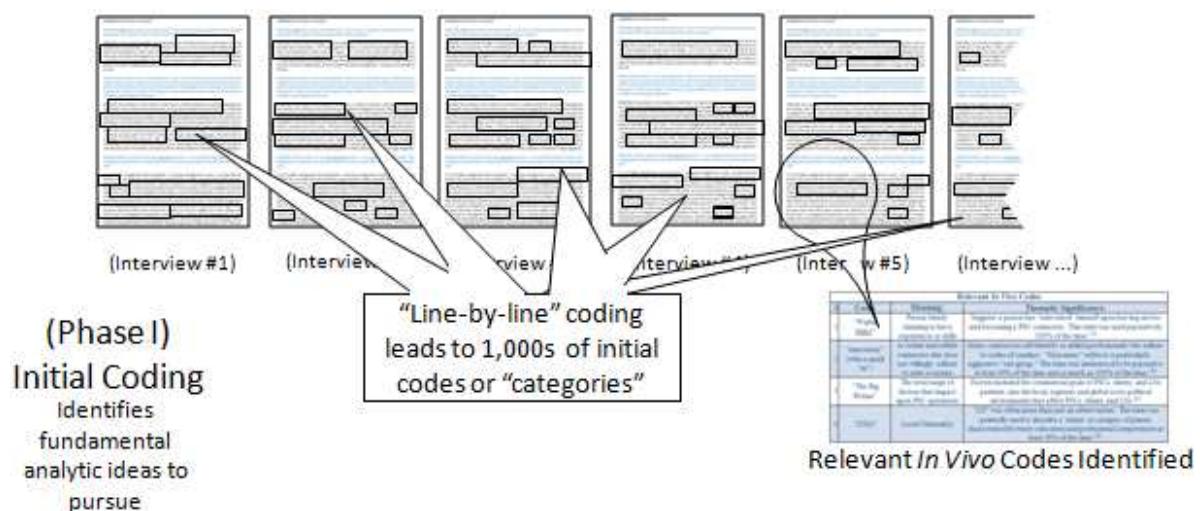
<sup>308</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 72–95; Glaser, 1978, p. 83; Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 108)

<sup>309</sup> “‘Coding’ means categorizing segments of data with a short name that simultaneously summarizes and accounts for each piece of data” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 43).

underlying this thesis were designed to develop a rich description of the entire data set as opposed to a detailed account of one particular aspect of the data.<sup>310</sup>

### Initial Coding Phase

Initial coding was done by a “line-by-line” review of interview transcripts, supported by memos, to identify fundamental “analytic ideas to pursue in further data collection and analysis.”<sup>311</sup> During initial coding, each line of the interview transcripts was labelled according to the meaning inherent to the line. Special ‘in vivo’ codes were also noted during the initial coding phase.<sup>312</sup> ‘In vivo’ codes are codes for participants’ “special terms” that have no meaning out of context. It is the highly-detailed nature of initial coding that enables GT research to pass tests of “fit” and “relevance.”<sup>313</sup> The end result of the initial coding phase was a list of thousands of initial codes that represented the thoughts and concerns of the interview participants. The following chart depicts the process of identifying the fundamental ideas inherent to each line of the interview transcripts. Because this chart is designed to depict the initial coding process, the interview texts and ‘in vivo’ codes are too small to read; however, these codes are presented in detail in the following chapter:



<sup>310</sup> (Sandelowski, 1995, p. 190)

<sup>311</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 46–50; Glaser, 1992, p. 40)

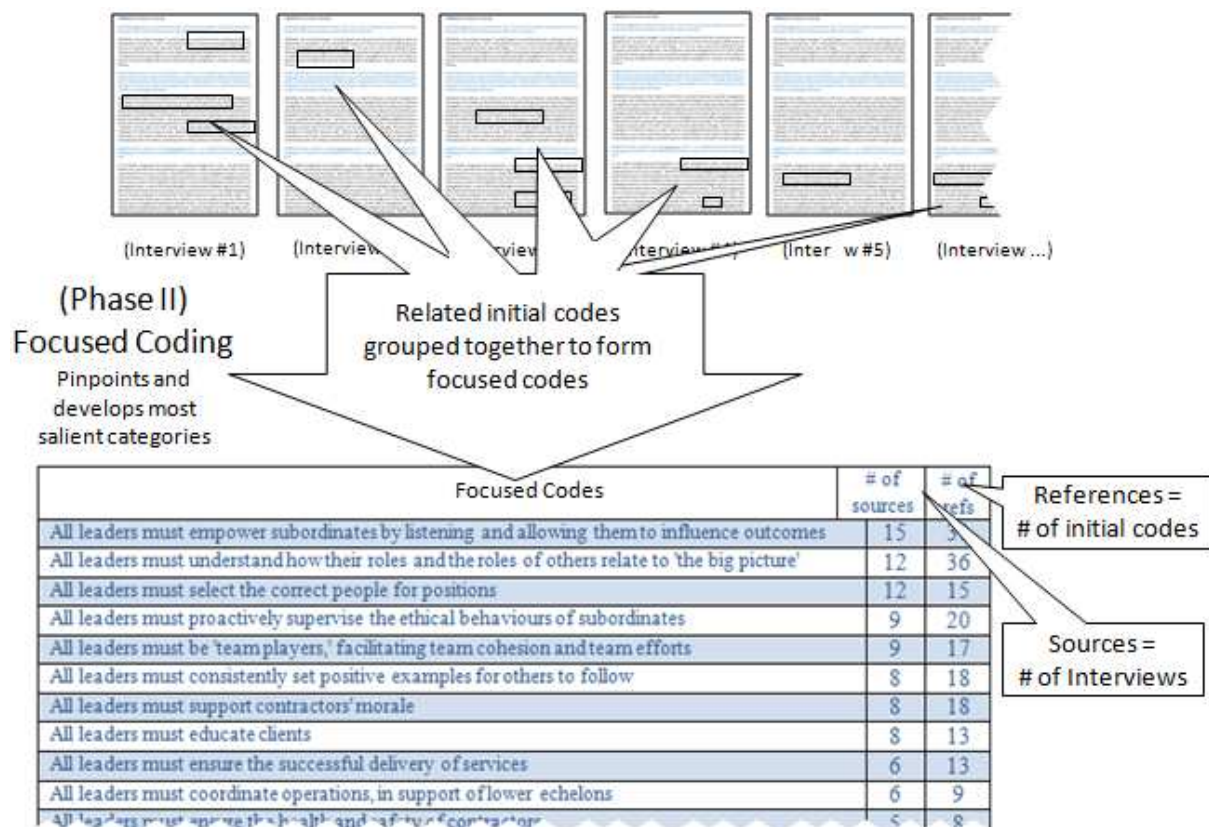
<sup>312</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, p. 55; Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 65)

<sup>313</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, p. 54)

## Focused Coding Phase

Focused coding “pinpoints and develops the most salient categories” determined during the initial coding phase. This section describes the focused coding phase in detail, demonstrating how the analytic ideas inherent to the list of initial codes were used to develop focused codes that were grounded in the data. It also describes how focused codes coalesced to form greater themes that could be defined in terms of properties, dimensions, and variations.

The following diagram (below) shows how initial codes from multiple interviews were combined to form focused codes. The diagram depicts interview texts across the top with small boxes throughout the texts that represent related initial codes. Initial codes were compiled from multiple interviews (depicted by the arrows flowing downwards) and grouped together according to their similarities. This resulted in a list of focused codes supported by a quantifiable number of references and sources.



Some initial codes were not supported by subsequent data collection and discarded. Repeatedly-present initial codes were either turned into stand-alone focused codes or amalgamated into more-encompassing focused codes. Having illustrated (above) the general process by which focused codes were created, the next chart (below) provides a more detailed

example of how this thesis's research's line-by-line coding process led to the formulation of the focused codes.<sup>314</sup> A focused code entitled "All leaders must empower subordinates by listening and allowing them to influence outcomes" is used to exemplify the process. All of this thesis's focused codes were created in this way.

Throughout the interview texts, many initial codes pertaining to "empowerment" were found. The chart below shows 10 of 31 interview text excerpts pertaining to "empowerment" that were grouped and analysed together.

Lines extracted from the interview texts pertaining to "empowerment"	Interview # (Source)	Ref #
"So in the end, what happens is, those guys that <i>were</i> very good, suddenly aren't that good anymore. And they <i>are</i> if they were to move on and do something different, you know, then they'd be good at what they did. But, what they do is they start keeping things to themselves because as far as they're concerned, they have no impact on the company. So, that is quite difficult as a manager to try and re-remind them and re-educate them to "don't stop trying" because it may change. So, that's a challenge."	#2	1
"So, you know, you're making people understand and... <i>and!</i> ... that should go back up the chain as well because they should feel that they've got an input with the company as well. Their good ideas [at the bottom] and their abilities should be taken into account as well."	#2	2
"You must empower the people that you have working for you. Otherwise, you will get a very limited workforce that will work within a very narrow bandwidth."	#2	3
"I believe I am [empowered]. Yes. And 'yes' I do believe we...can certainly make a difference [in terms of ethical standards]; for sure we can."	#3	4
"But that's the sort of difficult thing you need to deal with. But as long as you carefully outline –and sensitively as well– to the right people and the right management chain, I felt that I had the backing of people to make those decisions."	#4	5
"Absolutely. And if that weren't the case then I certainly wouldn't be here. And that is one of the things that I do enjoy with [this company]: that there is the ability to have that type of candid discussion."	#5	6
"Well, it's [a large project] but everything in-country falls under [this office]. The project manager we have down there is absolutely self-sustaining and they have their own set-up. So, to a certain degree, he does have his own flexibility."	#6	7
"Yes; in short: yes. We've got a really good team. Both myself and [a country-level colleague] have been here a while now and I think [corporate] has accepted that [a country-level colleague and I] make decisions based on the need of the company and the individual. And I don't think we have any problems or negative feedback from [the corporate-level offices] at all."	#6	8
"...I think at the minute (I don't know how it's going to go in the future, but at the minute), we've got a really good personality as [the corporate-level manager]. He's commanding, but he's also down-to-earth. He doesn't mind delegating responsibility. So, I think for that reason, we've just about got it right. I don't think we could ask for any more support from the guys in [corporate headquarters]."	#6	9
"I've got a very good team in place; so what I've done since I took over in Operations is to put in people that I trust and sort of let them get on with it. 'Mission command,' the army version of "mission command," is empowering the subordinates. But that doesn't mean... as somebody in the army once said to me, doesn't mean abrogation of supervision. So, it's about ensuring that you empower people but that you are also checking to see that they are doing what you want them to do."	#7	10
...Remaining 21 excerpts not shown...		

<sup>314</sup> Individual categories (focused codes) were created according to the coding process suggested by Charmaz (2006, p. 44). Charmaz "[named] segments of data with a label that simultaneously categoriz[ed], summariz[ed], and account[ed] for each piece of data."



There were an additional 21 excerpts similar to the first 10, shown above, from an additional eight interview participants that are not shown here for the sake of brevity.<sup>315</sup> Each of the 31 excerpts suggested that particular leaders have a responsibility to ‘empower’ their subordinates. These excerpts were ‘given by’ and ‘in reference to’ many levels of leadership; thus, the responsibility to ‘empower’ subordinates could be attributed to “all leaders.” Furthermore, 10 of the excerpts (32%) suggested in some way that “listening to subordinates” was integral to empowerment; and a different 10 of the excerpts (32%) suggested that “allowing subordinates to influence outcomes” was integral to empowerment.

Each excerpt on its own suggested the importance of “empowerment” but offered only a limited explanation of how or why empowerment might be important. However, the sum of all 31 of the excerpts enabled a rich explanation of exactly *how* leaders can empower their subordinates and *which actions* can lead subordinates to feel empowered. Together, these 31 excerpts resulted in the generation of a single, detailed focused code entitled:

Focused Code	# of Sources	# of Refs
“All leaders must empower subordinates by listening and allowing them to influence outcomes”	15	31

The final step in the focused coding phase involved grouping focused codes together to generate “themes.” Themes are fully-saturated central ideas that are supported by groups of focused codes, which are, in turn, comprised of a quantifiable number of references and sources. This study relied on theoretical sampling, which calls for data collection (interviewing) and analyses to continue as long as there is a reasonable chance that further collection will lead to new information. There are debates about the extent to which theoretical saturation can be reliably determined (paraphrased as: ‘how researchers can know when there is ‘nothing new left to discover’’). For the purposes of analysis, themes were considered saturated when: (a) they could be defined in terms of their “properties, dimensions, and variations” and (b) further data collection continues to reveal the existence of the theme without revealing anything new about it.<sup>316</sup> Themes that appeared relevant but were not recorded with a high enough frequency to be ‘saturated’ were noted as potential subjects for follow-on research.<sup>317</sup> Following the recommendations of Wilson-Scott and Howell, a Conditional Relationship Guide and the Reflective Coding Matrix were referenced

<sup>315</sup> (15 of 24 participants = 62.5%) Nearly 63% of participants addressed “empowerment,”

<sup>316</sup> (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 263)

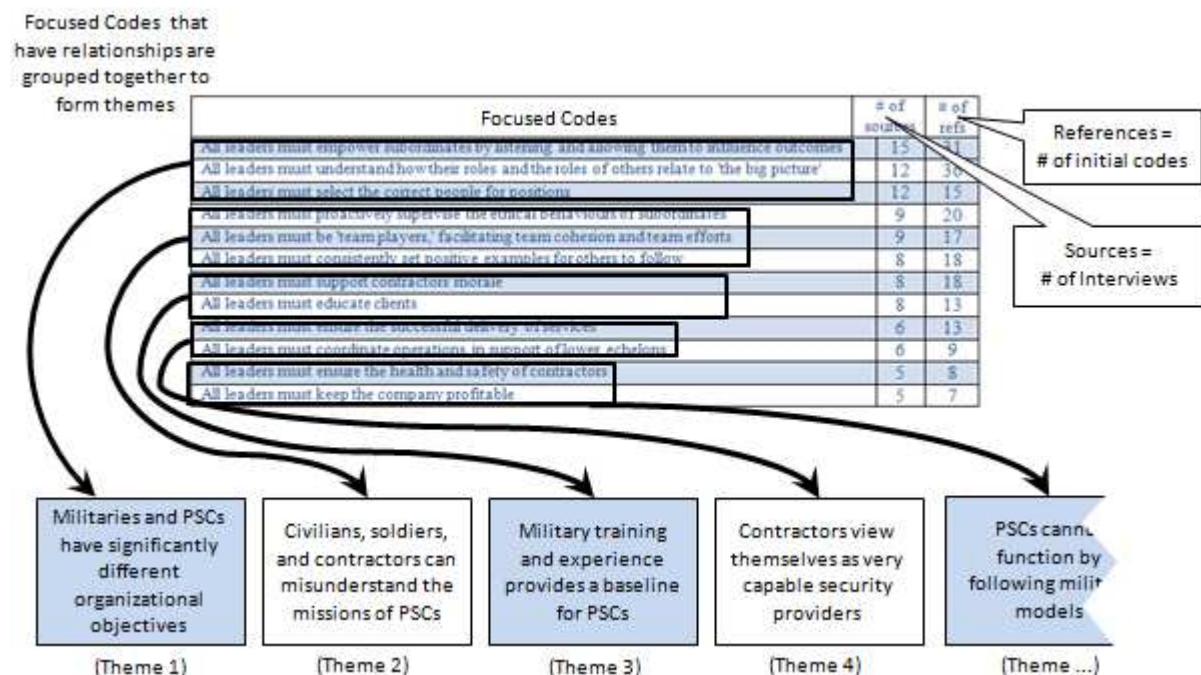
<sup>317</sup> (Sandelowski, 1995, p. 189)



to help with data management and data organization.<sup>318</sup> These two tools use spreadsheets and categories to help define the properties, dimensions, and variations of themes. Conceptual mapping was also used to help gauge when theoretical saturation was reached.<sup>319</sup> No categories were considered saturated before the first three interviews.<sup>320</sup>

Although a single focused code might offer some insight into a particular inquiry, themes offer more balanced and reliable explanations because they encompass a wider range of information. A single focused code, for example, might note either the merits or demerits of a topic; however, a single theme can encompass multiple supportive and unsupportive focused codes. Examining themes made up of related focused codes, rather than examining each focused code in isolation, provided more reliable information for answering thesis questions.

The chart below depicts how focused codes were grouped together to form themes. Because this chart is designed to show the general coding process, the focused codes may not be readable; however, each of the focused codes and themes discovered in this thesis's research is discussed in detail at the end of the next chapter:



<sup>318</sup> (Wilson-Scott & Howell, 2008, pp. 5, 9–10)

<sup>319</sup> (Giske & Artinian, 2007, p. 75)

<sup>320</sup> As recommended by Glaser (1978, p. 20) to prevent the hasty dismissal of relevant information.

## Theoretical Coding Phase

Theoretical codes specify relationships between themes that are developed during focused coding.<sup>321</sup> The end result of the theoretical coding phase was a detailed narrative that explained new information in sufficient detail to answer this thesis' central questions.

To help identify relationships between themes, the research underlying this thesis referenced two tools. The first tool was Glaser's 18 coding "families."<sup>322</sup> Glaser's list of 'coding families' suggested relationships that are commonly found between themes. The second tool, NVivo10 software,<sup>323</sup> was a qualitative data analysis tool, which assists coding by generating initial categories, patterns, themes, and relationships. NVivo10 helps by suggesting links between words and concepts to facilitate the coding of text-based data; and it features visualization tools to help researchers discover and communicate relationships via graphical techniques. Other programs were considered, however most modern coding programs including QDA Miner, ATLAS, and others were all found to have comparable functionality. NVivo10 was the most accessible program and it served the purposes of this study.

Throughout all three phases of the coding process, the "constant comparative method" was applied to ensure that analyses resulted in a clearly supported, grounded theory.<sup>324</sup> The use of this method meant that past interviews were re-coded as newly acquired information caused previous participants' statements to be understood in new ways. 'Constant comparative analysis' began after the third interview and continued throughout all three levels of coding.<sup>325</sup>

The following chart depicts the end of the theoretical coding phase: relationships between the themes were identified such that a detailed narrative could be formed.

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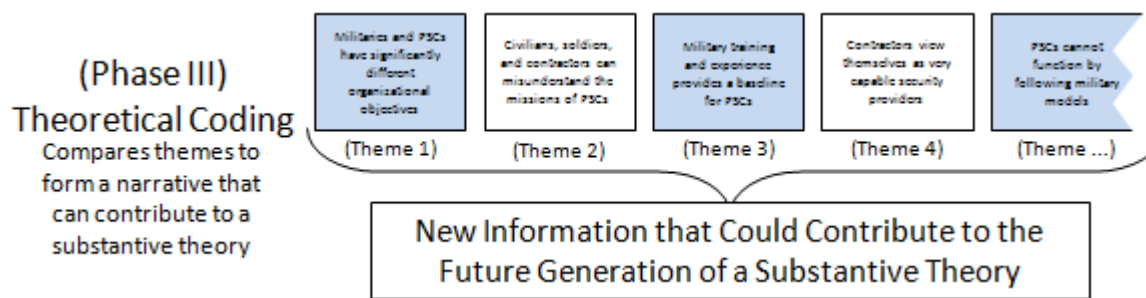
<sup>321</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, p. 63)

<sup>322</sup> (Glaser, 1978, p. 74)

<sup>323</sup> NVivo10 software is designed to assist researchers in qualitative data analysis.

<sup>324</sup> The constant comparative method, used by all GT researchers, is divided into four stages: 1) comparing incidences applicable to each category, 2) integrating categories and their properties, 3) delimiting the theory, and 4) writing the theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 105).

<sup>325</sup> Despite Glaser's (1994, p. 28) encouragement to begin comparing from the second interview, a significant amount of time and thesis revision between the initial interviews made it necessary to wait until the third.



Following the theoretical coding phase, the research underlying this thesis referenced existing leadership theories and PSC literature to help substantiate the new information suggested by the coding process. External research and documents other than interview texts were referenced to help gauge the accuracy of information through data triangulation. External research included Petersohn's comparisons of "escalation of force" incidences in militaries and PSCs.<sup>326</sup> Petersohn's findings helped substantiate how ethics, compared to other priorities, informed the decisions of armed PSC leaders in hostile environments. Documents and policies included those created by the corporate leaders of PSCs participating in this thesis's research. These documents assisted in informing this thesis about the ethical priorities of corporate-level leaders and they were useful in substantiating statements made by interview participants about the official policies of their PSCs. The hiring, evaluating, and dismissal policies and norms of PSC Human Resources departments helped to further corroborate information gained during interviews about which skills and behaviours PSC leaders employ to influence the ethical conduct of subordinates in hostile environments. Hiring and vetting policies at the corporate-level also helped indicate the extent to which corporate-level leaders perceive leadership to be important to ensuring that their priorities are met. Finally, performance reviews, reports, and investigations from the US Congressional Budget Office, the US Government Accountability Office, and the UK Foreign Commonwealth Office, helped this thesis to contextualize self-reported perceptions of leadership and ethics. Although these documents were not coded and analysed in the same way as interview texts, they provided valuable points of comparison for the information revealed by the coding process. A detailed discussion of how these external studies and documents were used is presented in the following chapter.

<sup>326</sup> Petersohn (2013) reviews shooting incidences between the Iraqi and US militaries and PSCs relying, in large part, on US government reports made publically accessible by WikiLeaks.

## Validity and Reliability of the Coding Process

Coding has been criticised as an unreliable and inaccurate data analysis technique because many coders are prone to using intuitive heuristics and biased categorization techniques; especially when faced with very little or very complex data.<sup>327</sup> While it may be difficult to evaluate the reliability of qualitative instruments and data analysis techniques,<sup>328</sup> reliability can be partially substantiated through researcher triangulation.<sup>329</sup> “Inter-coder reliability” describes the degree to which two coders interpret data in the same way, relevant to a body of research. High inter-coder reliability is often regarded as an indication of a coding process’s validity and reliability.<sup>330</sup> In the case of this study, researcher triangulation entailed using a second researcher with coding knowledge and experience to review and code sanitized transcripts. This tested whether others would code data in a similar way.<sup>331</sup> Reliability was further substantiated through ‘respondent validation:’ a process of comparing a researcher’s analyses with the conclusions of one or more research participants.<sup>332</sup> Together, these validity and reliability testing techniques were judged to be sufficient to establish the strengths and weaknesses of conclusions. The results of these tests are discussed in detail in the following chapter.

<b>Research Design Summary</b>			
<b>Data Collection Technique</b>	<b>Instrumentation</b>	<b>Data Analysis Techniques</b>	<b>Data Analysis Tools</b>
Semi-Structured Interviews delivered via “The Interview Guide” Approach	Interview Guide containing: 1) Open-Ended Questions 2) Critical Incident Questions	Constant Comparative Method	1) NVivo10 2) Conditional Relationship Guide 3) Reflexive Coding Matrix
PSC Literature and Government Documentation	Existing literature regarding: 1) Leadership Theories 2) PSC Literature a) PSC Policy Documents b) PSC Guidelines and Norms c) US & UK Government Reports on British PSCs	Research findings were compared to and triangulated with contemporary debates regarding leadership and PSCs	N/A
<b>Interviews (n = until theoretical saturation; [~ 15])</b>			

<sup>327</sup> (Tversky & Kahneman, 2000, p. 35) Other researchers were more critical of qualitative data coding techniques, going so far as to question whether research relying on the judgment of a single coder can ever be replicated by other coders (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002, p. 599; Weinberger et al., 1998, p. 392)

<sup>328</sup> (Patton, 2002, p. 192)

<sup>329</sup> (Dootson, 1995, p. 185; Jick, 1979, p. 604; Patton, 2002, p. 247); “Analysis of data (particularly qualitative) by multiple analysts serves not only to amplify the findings and increase validity but also add to reliability” (Banik, 1993, p. 49).

<sup>330</sup> (Hruschka et al., 2004, p. 320) Inter-coder reliability must still be calculated according to appropriate indices, with appropriate minimum acceptable levels. Pilot testing can also help to test reliability (Lombard et al., 2002, p. 600).

<sup>331</sup> (Thurmond, 2001, p. 254)

<sup>332</sup> (Mays & Pope, 2000, p. 51)

## Limitations of the Research

The principal limitations of the research underlying this thesis stem from the methodology, design, instrumentation, sampling procedures, and data analyses techniques that were employed. Despite efforts to mitigate weaknesses inherent to these areas, limitations that affect the research's applicability and generalizability need to be acknowledged.

### Limits of the Methodology and Design

Some methodological and design limitations inherent to social and Grounded Theory (GT) research also apply to the research underlying this thesis. This thesis's research adhered to the methodological framework described by Kathy Charmaz as Constructivist Grounded Theory. However, even vigilant adherence to Charmaz's framework could not mitigate all concerns; several arguable choices had to be made concerning the literature review and the coding process.

The canons of GT normally dictate that an extensive literature review is conducted only *after* data is collected and analyzed to help ensure that the emergent theory is grounded in the data rather than the result of preconceived ideas.<sup>333</sup> "Extensive" reading is discouraged; however, the definition of "extensive" is debatable. The depth of a researcher's initial literature review depends on the nature of the inquiry: research concerned with factor-relating theory (as opposed to factor-isolating theory) often requires a more detailed literature review to ensure that researchers have enough knowledge to identify links between factors.

This thesis seeks to contribute to the generation of a new, factor-relating theory and so it followed Cutcliffe's suggestion to conduct a more detailed literature review prior to gathering and analyzing data.<sup>334</sup> This thesis's initial literature review was detailed enough to define key terms including leadership, ethical behaviour, and PSCs. The literature review was also sufficiently detailed to develop a sense of the key concerns of stakeholders regarding PSCs and ethical behaviour. Additional literature was reviewed after the data had been collected and analyzed in order to better interpret and explain this thesis's findings and position the thesis in the body of knowledge. Reviewing literature and incorporating literature into the

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<sup>333</sup> (Hickey, 1997; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stern, 1980; Strauss & Corbin, 1994)

<sup>334</sup> A more detailed literature review may help the researcher "clarify concepts, before going on to induce a theory that explicates and explains how they relate to one another." (Cutcliffe, 2000, p. 1481)

data collection and analyses processes in two separate phases is in accordance with the canons of constructivist GT; however, deciding *when* and *how much* literature to include is a subjective decision that must be made by the researcher. This leaves GT research open to critique: was enough literature read before the study to sensitize the researcher to relevant concepts and lines of inquiry? Was too much literature read before the study such that the researcher's questions and findings were affected by preconceived notions borne of previous research? In either event, "no potential researcher is an empty vessel, a person with no history or background... many researchers [pursue] particular theme[s] [in which] they may already possess some background knowledge of the substantive area they intend to study."<sup>335</sup> While this thesis sought an appropriate balance during its literature review, the researcher's background included approximately two years of employment within a British PSC at the project level. Some degree of bias is unavoidable in social research, which places limits on the reliability of research outcomes. Researcher biases can be even more harmful in GT research because themes and theories are meant to evolve according to interpretations of data. Constructivist GT research is not rendered immune from researcher bias by allowing realities to be co-constructed by both the researcher and research participants. The degree to which researchers can bracket themselves during data collection and analyses directly limits the reliability of the research outcomes.

The canons of GT also dictate that coding be conducted via the constant comparative method. There are several different types of GT, including those championed by Glaser, Strauss and Corbin, and Charmaz.<sup>336</sup> Each type prescribes notably different coding processes and philosophies.<sup>337</sup> Regardless of which type is chosen, however, coding processes for social science research are all subject to concerns about reliability and accuracy. Critics assert that many coders are prone to using intuitive heuristics and biased categorization techniques; especially when faced with very little or very complex data.<sup>338</sup> Some critics also assert that, despite measures to improve inter-coder reliability, the work of a single coder can never be fully replicated by other coders. As such, the reliability of knowledge gleaned through qualitative data coding techniques is inherently limited.<sup>339</sup>

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<sup>335</sup> (Cutcliffe, 2000, p. 1480)

<sup>336</sup> (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Glaser, 1978)

<sup>337</sup> Kendall (1999, p. 746) summarizes some of these differences and states that "Whereas these differences are neither right nor wrong, it is important to note that there is a clear difference between approaches, and researchers have a choice of which method to use."

<sup>338</sup> (Tversky & Kahneman, 2000, p. 35)

<sup>339</sup> Lombard et al., 2002, p. 599; Weinberger et al., 1998, p. 392)

This thesis sought to produce new information that could assist in formulating a substantive theory that explains the impact of leadership on ethical behaviour within PSCs; thus, it employed the coding technique prescribed by Glaser which recommends (but does not require) referencing 18 coding families to help researchers “systematically...connect categories of data to each other.”<sup>340</sup> The decision to see the theoretical coding phase through to its end and the decision to conduct researcher triangulation resulted in the generation of more reliable information. However, the agreement measures yielded by the researcher triangulation process demonstrate that there are limits to the reliability of the findings of the research underlying this thesis. As many as 10% (+/- 3.75%) of the initial codes feeding the focused codes and 10% (+/- 3.75%) of the focused codes feeding the final theoretical codes were debated by the second researcher assisting with triangulation. Through researcher training, iterative between-coder comparisons, and repeated definitional discussions, it is possible for multiple coders to improve their inter-coder reliability scores.<sup>341</sup> This improvement process does not detract from the validity or reliability of the research because interpretive convergence can be a result of multiple coders moderating themselves towards more-generalized understandings of definitions and category boundaries. Furthermore, researcher triangulation was conducted using only a 20% sample of the focused codes. While this is a statistically representative sample size, qualitative research is subjective and there is a much greater possibility for varied interpretations. For example, two researchers who agree quite closely on codes pertaining to ethical behaviour might disagree radically on codes pertaining to perceptions of local nationals. The reliability of this thesis’s research could be improved by having multiple qualified social researchers re-code the data; and by having researchers re-code the entire dataset rather than a 20% sample.

### Limits of the Instrumentation

Several instruments were used to gather and analyse data during this thesis’s research. The primary instrument used to gather data was a semi-structured interview guide that was constructed specifically for the purpose of this thesis. Researchers have addressed concerns

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<sup>340</sup> Quote is from Kendall (1999, p. 748). Kendall summarizes Glaser’s (1978) technique, which does not rely on “a predetermined organizing schema” like that of Strauss and Corbin. Glaser’s technique helps to generate theory while Strauss and Corbin’s technique appears to be more useful for generating description (Kendall, 1999, p. 755). Glaser’s use of coding ‘families’ is compatible with Charmaz’s (2006, p. 63) constructivist version of GT.

<sup>341</sup> (Hruschka et al., 2004, p. 321)

about the validity, accuracy, precision, and reliability of semi-structured interview guides;<sup>342</sup> however, possibilities remain that data can be lost or mishandled due to language barriers, transcribing errors, and misunderstandings during human interaction. “Reflexivity” was incorporated interview guide approach to increase the validity of the data that was gathered.<sup>343</sup> Examples of examining interviewer-participant interactions during interviews include calling attention to the understandings that have been communicated and checking that understandings are being shared. The following interview excerpts exemplify this control measure:

[Interviewer]: “So, the military has a certain culture; a certain structure that suits some people well, as you said. So, I’m trying to think of the words that you said. It’s the “kind of person that goes into the military and the military structure that already exists” that gives them that ethos. Much more than the fact that they have sat down and read the Queens Regulations and Standards and said “I’ll sign off on that.”

[Participant]: “Precisely.”<sup>344</sup>

[Interviewer]: “So, [corporate leaders] seem to be supportive if you badger them hard enough; and they seem to be supportive as long as nothing you do costs them money?”

[Participant]: “It’s not badgering them. It’s forcing them into taking a corner. I wouldn’t say “badgering” helped. Because you badger for more funds and they always say “no.” In certain circumstances, you have to make them make decisions. You say “I don’t want to do this; I don’t think it’s right for all of these reasons. Are you going to say “yes” or “no”? What’s it to be...I am waiting for an order.”<sup>345</sup>

Despite control measures being implemented, the findings of the research underlying this thesis are still subject to an unknown number of errors or inaccuracies that stem from weaknesses in the data collection instrument. Errors and inaccuracies place limits on the validity and reliability of this research’s findings.

Two additional important instruments were referenced during the data analysis process: the Conditional Relationship Guide and the Reflective Coding Matrix. These instruments assisted with defining the properties, dimensions, and variations of themes.<sup>346</sup> Although the use of these tools helped to confirm theoretical saturation, these tools could not completely mitigate critical concerns related to knowing when theoretical saturation has truly been

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<sup>342</sup> (Brod et al., 2009; Bryman et al., 1988; Flanagan, 1954; Parry, 1998a)

<sup>343</sup> In this section, adding “reflexivity” means “examining how [the interviewer] and the participants [monitor] each other’s talk and [respond] to each other in interaction.” Monitoring interactions acknowledges that the act of measuring something also changes that thing. This awareness and acknowledgement increases the validity of gathered data (Hall & Callery, 2001, p. 264).

<sup>344</sup> (Interview #4)

<sup>345</sup> (Interview #8)

<sup>346</sup> These tools assisted with data management and organization, as well as helping to determine when theoretical saturation was reached (Wilson-Scott & Howell, 2008, pp. 5, 9–10).



reached. Debates are on-going with regards to how researchers can know when there is ‘nothing new left to discover’.<sup>347</sup> The Conditional Relationship Guide and the Reflective Coding Matrix represent logical attempts to address concerns about premature declarations of theoretical saturation; however, there are limits to the extent that research can ‘know that nothing is unknown.’ This thesis’s research determined that there are 11 leadership skills and behaviours that impact upon the ethical behaviour of British private security personnel: errors that might have been made in declaring theoretical saturation too early could mean that additional influential leadership skills and behaviours exist but were not identified by this research.

### Limits of the Sampling Procedures

The research underlying this thesis relied on purposive, non-probability sampling during data collection. This type of sampling procedure facilitates sampling for diversity, which enables researchers to examine the breadth of issues inherent to a subject. This sampling procedure is most useful for examining issues that have not yet been defined or demarcated. Findings reached through purposive, non-probability sampling, however, are not normally generalizable to the larger populations from which samples were taken.

This thesis’s findings are therefore limited in two ways. First, this thesis suggests three drivers of ethical behaviour within British PSCs and 11 leadership skills and behaviours that affect those drivers. But the research underlying this thesis cannot be used to rank those drivers or leadership skills and behaviours in order of importance. Secondly, this thesis’s research cannot be used to quantify the magnitude of the impact of those leadership skills and behaviours. Sampling for diversity rather than representativeness means that conclusions about the priorities or impact of leadership are only generalizable to the sample population.

### Summary

This chapter detailed the theoretical and methodological frameworks that underpin this thesis, key components of the research design, and limitations inherent to those components. Because an interpretivist approach is useful for exploring new subject areas and the topic of leadership, this thesis follows the tenets of constructivist GT. Initial conclusions were

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<sup>347</sup> (Glenn A. Bowen, 2008, p. 149; Dey, 2007, p. 168; Sandelowski, 1995)

generated by analyzing primary data obtained through interviews. Those conclusions were then compared to alternate data sources, improving the accuracy of this thesis's findings through triangulation. The data-gathering and analysis phase of this thesis's research was designed to produce new information that could contribute to the future generation of a substantive theory explaining the extent to which leadership skills and behaviours influence the ethical behaviour of British PSC personnel in hostile environments. "Extent" is defined in terms of the general magnitude of leadership's influence and exactly which leadership skills and behaviours are more (or less) influential. This chapter closes with a discussion of limitations of this thesis's research that stem from its methodology, design, instrumentation, and sampling procedures. Measures taken to mitigate the research's limitations appear to be sufficient to enable this thesis to make useful contributions to the bodies of PSC and leadership knowledge. Having described the research plan in terms of methodology, design, and procedures, Chapter Four: *Presentation of Findings* will present the data gathered during the execution of this plan.

## Chapter Four: Presentation of Findings

This thesis used Charmaz's constructivist GT methodology to help explain the extent to which leadership impacts on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. In accordance with GT methods, data was gathered and analyzed simultaneously. For the sake of clarity, however, Chapters Four and Five (respectively) present findings and analyses separately. Chapter Four's separate presentation of the findings enables readers to trace the path of data through the levels of coding. Presenting the findings in this way improves the transparency of the process by which data was distilled into analyzable information. It also demonstrates the rigour behind this thesis' findings and it helps to facilitate any future attempts to replicate this study. The logic underlying the suggestions generated by this thesis is thus presented in one unbroken chain. Throughout Chapter Four, brief explanations of key findings are also given to help elucidate the relevancy of the data. These explanations are rooted in the analyses discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

Chapter Four begins by describing the results of the applied methodology: the participants' demographics are discussed followed by a summary of the results of the three-levelled coding process. Using the techniques discussed at the end of Chapter Three: *Methodology*, the coding process is assessed for validity and reliability via researcher triangulation. Links between codes and themes are assessed for their relevance through respondent validation.

Chapter Four subsequently presents a detailed discussion of the findings of the research underlying this thesis. The literature review defined "leadership" as "the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to achieve a common goal";<sup>348</sup> thus, this section limits discussions of its findings to leader-follower interactions and observable cases of leaders affecting the purpose, direction, or motivation of others. The literature review defined "ethical behaviour" as "adhering to rules, standards, codes, or principles that provide guidelines for morally right behaviour and integrity in specific situations";<sup>349</sup> thus, this section also limits discussions of its findings to observable cases of people adhering to guidelines or impacting on behavioural integrity. It is noteworthy that the initial codes generated during constant comparative analyses were generated independently of the interview questions: data was coded according to its meaning and relevancy regardless of

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<sup>348</sup> This definition drew primarily from (Northouse, 2012, p. 6; Stogdill, 1974, p. 3; US Government, 2007b, p. 1) and secondarily from (Bass, 2008, p. 25; Burns, 2010, p. 19; Gill, 2011a, p. 9; Rost, 1993a, p. 99)

<sup>349</sup> This definition drew primarily from (Lewis, 1985, p. 381)

which interview question prompted participants to give the data. Coding in such a manner helped to ensure that data was not forced into pre-determined lines of inquiry.<sup>350</sup> For the sake of order and clarity, however, the findings are organized and presented according to the 12 core questions on the interview guide. Two sets of focused codes that did not directly address any of the 12 interview guide questions have been included as “QX” and “QY” at the end of the discussion.

Finally, Chapter Four introduces 17 themes that show links between leadership and ethical behaviour. The links appear to be strong enough to achieve this thesis’ goal of contributing new information to leadership and PSC literature. Each of these 17 themes are analyzed and discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

### Methodological Findings

This section describes the results of the applied methodology. The participant selection process and participant demographics are discussed to enable a more detailed discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of this thesis’s research and to increase other researchers’ abilities to replicate this research.

### Participant Selection

To obtain sampling frames, a “Gatekeeper Approach Letter” (*Appendix A*) was e-mailed to the corporate offices of 16 separate British PSCs. Four responses were initially received and phone calls were made to those PSCs that did not respond to ensure that all invitations to participate were received. Four British PSCs fully accepted the opportunity to participate in this thesis’s research. These four PSCs provided sampling frames in the form of contact information for leaders who met the selection criteria. Three PSCs declined to provide sampling frames but offered access to select individuals who were willing to participate independently of their companies. Finally, during the research underlying this thesis, several qualified participants from outside the original sample frames were encountered while attending conferences and professional expositions. These people were included due to their abilities to contribute useful information.

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<sup>350</sup> Barbour (2001, p. 1116) explains: “...coding categories reflect the content of data collected rather than the questions on the interview schedule or focus group topic guide.” Themes generated from the data must not be forced into predetermined categories (Glaser, 1992, p. 12).

Data collected from the research participants during theoretical sampling allowed the data collection strategy to develop over time. Theoretical sampling is a process of data collection that allows researchers to simultaneously collect, code, and analyse data in order to develop new ideas and insights.<sup>351</sup> Examples of developments included: the incorporation of leaders from previously unknown levels of decision-making authority (regional leaders), incorporating leaders from new PSC sectors (maritime), and including data provided by experts ‘affiliated with’ but not currently conducting PSC operations.

In total, 24 interviews (approximately 27 hours of targeted discussions) were used to provide data for the project. This amount of data exceeded the amount used in other similar GT leadership research.<sup>352</sup>

### Participant Demographics

The following chart shows the demographics of the interview participants:

Participant Demographics						
#	Levels of Authority	Age	Military Rank	Years of exp in Military	Years of exp in PSCs	Total # of PSCs worked for
1	T, P	41 – 50	x	x	11 – 20	5 or more
2	T, P	41 – 50	NCO	21 – 30	2 – 5	3 – 4
3	R	31 – 40	NCO	11 – 20	2 – 5	1 – 2
4	R	31 – 40	Officer	6 – 10	2 – 5	1 – 2
5	P	31 – 40	Officer	6 – 10	6 – 10	1 – 2
6	C	41 – 50	NCO	21 – 30	2 – 5	1 – 2
7	C	31 – 40	x	1 – 5	6 – 10	3 – 4
8	P, R	31 – 40	Officer	6 – 10	2 – 5	1 – 2
9	P, R, C	41 – 50	Officer	21 – 30	2 – 5	1 – 2
10	T, P, R, C	61 – 70	Officer	21 – 30	21 – 30	5 or more
11	P, C	31 – 40	NCO	6 – 10	6 – 10	1 – 2
12	P, R, C	61 – 70	Officer	21 – 30	11 – 20	5 or more
13	T, P	41 – 50	NCO	21 – 30	6 – 10	1 – 2
14	T, P, C	41 – 50	NCO	11 – 20	6 – 10	3 – 4
15	T	31 – 40	NCO	11 – 20	2 – 5	1 – 2
16	T	41 – 50	Enlisted	6 – 10	2 – 5	3 – 4
17	P, R, C	41 – 50	Officer	6 – 10	6 – 10	1 – 2
18	P, R, C	61 – 70	Officer	31 – 40	21 – 30	X
19	R, C	41 – 50	Officer	11 – 20	6 – 10	1 – 2
20	T, P	61 – 70	NCO	11 – 20	21 – 30	1 – 2
21	T, P, R	31 – 40	NCO	6 – 10	6 – 10	1 – 2

<sup>351</sup> (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 45) Theoretical sampling is tied to the purpose of generating and developing theoretical ideas, rather than being aimed either at producing findings that are representative of a population or at testing hypotheses (Hammersley, 2006). Theoretical sampling seeks pertinent data to develop and refine emerging categories and it continues until no new properties of a category emerge (Charmaz, 2006, p. 96).

<sup>352</sup> (Cash-Baskett, 2011) n = 10; (Eich, 2008) n > 15; (Kan & Parry, 2004) n = 22 (semi-structured interviews)

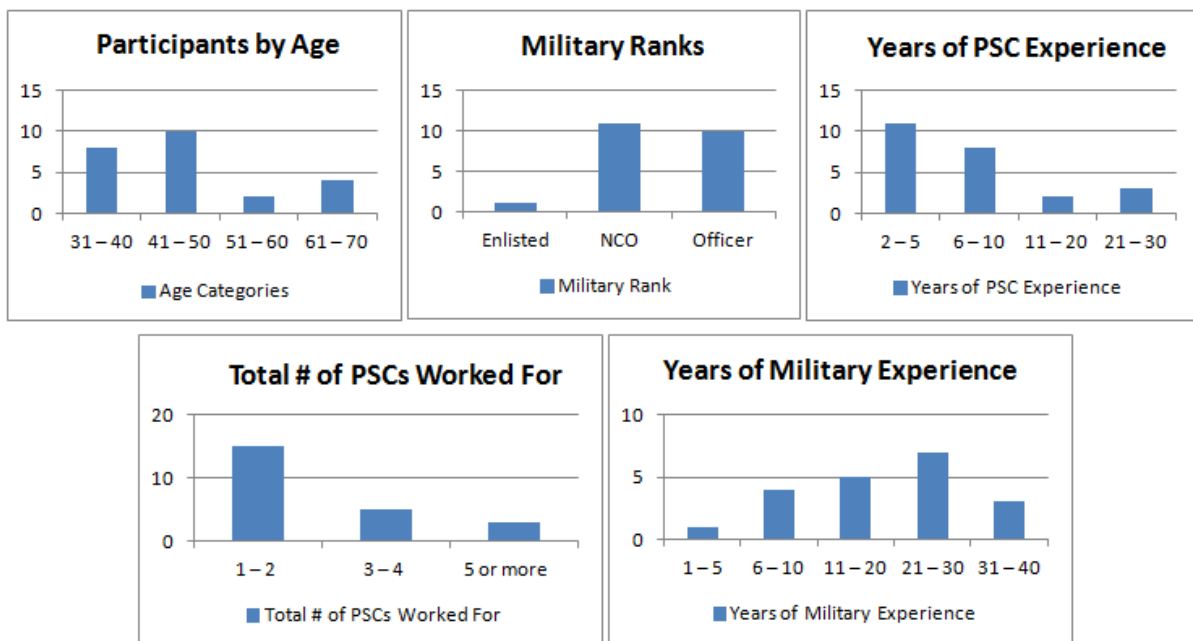
22	P	51 – 60	NCO	31 – 40	2 – 5	1 – 2
23	C	51 – 60	Officer	31 – 40	2 – 5	1 – 2
24	T, C	41 – 50	NCO	21 – 30	2 – 5	3 – 4

- Levels of decision-making authority within most PSCs include: T = Team; P = Project; R = Regional or country; and C = Corporate. The codes (T, P, R, C) annotated in this chart show the levels at which participants had experience *and* were willing to discuss experiences at that level with the researcher (T = 10; P = 15; R = 10; C = 12)
- Data is given in ranges to help protect the anonymity of interview participants
- Ages over 70 were outliers and thus categorized as (60-70) to help protect the anonymity of interview participants
- One participant had a national police service background; the “rank” is given here as its military equivalent
- Some fields show an “x” where participants declined to give information

The following charts summarize the demographics of the interview participants:

Participant Demographics (Summary)					
Average Levels of Authority Experienced	Age: Average	Age: Range	Military Rank: Average	Military Rank: Range	Years of exp in Military: Average
1.96	41.32	Approx 30 – 70	Mid-level NCO/ Officer	Private – General Officer	~ 18.05

Participant Demographics (Summary)				
Years of exp in Military: Range	Years of exp in PSCs: Average	Years of exp in PSCs: Range	Total # of PSCs worked for: Average	Total # of PSCs worked for: Range
~ 2 – 35	9.14	2-30	~ 2.55	~ 1 – 6



The ranges shown in the Participant Demographics charts include approximated figures to help protect the anonymity of the interview participants; however, the charts illustrate the strengths and diversity of the sample population. All of the interview participants had military experience except for one who was a police-trained, armed close protection officer

with significant experience in hostile environments. The experiential demographics of the research's sample population (with regards to military training), appear to resemble those of the overall private security industry: 95.8% of the sample population came from a military background while roughly 4% had a police background.<sup>353</sup> Additionally, at least 70.8% of the interview participants served in a combat arms (teeth arms) branch of the military.<sup>354</sup> This fits with the industry trend that the majority of armed PSC contractors are combat trained with hostile environment experience.<sup>355</sup>

Of the interview participants, 65.2% had worked for multiple PSCs.<sup>356</sup> Thus, although only seven PSCs agreed (to varying degrees) to support the research, interview participants were able to describe first-hand experiences within at least 15 separate British PSCs. This thesis focused on British PSCs; thus only data attributable to British PSCs was included. Comments pertaining to three non-British PSCs were omitted from the data set. When asked "How many PSCs have you worked for?" most participants gave the total number and the names of the PSCs. 19 PSCs were left unnamed. It is unknown if any of these 19 PSCs were British or were additional to the list of 15 named British PSCs.

Of the interview participants, 62.5% of the participants had significant leadership experience at multiple levels of decision-making authority.<sup>357</sup> A regression analysis revealed that after 1.66 years in the industry, a contractor was 11% more likely, with each additional year, to change companies. Also, after 1.4 years in the industry, a contractor was about 6% more likely, with each additional year, to move to a higher level of decision-making authority. These statistics were determined by conducting a regression analysis using the participants' demographic data. While the predictive power of time in the industry was rather low (11% and 6% respectively), the association between time in the industry and the chances of changing companies or levels was high (correlation coefficients were greater than 0.5 [0.512 and 0.531 respectively]). These statistics suggest (but do not prove) that there is a

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<sup>353</sup> (23 of 24 = 95.8%); additionally, one participant had a Royal Military Police background. According to interview participants with expert knowledge of PSC Human Resource practices, approximately 95% of armed contractors working for PSCs have national military training; on case-by-case bases, some PSCs accept personnel with paramilitary or police training (Interviews #6, 11, 19, and 21).

<sup>354</sup> At least (17 of 24 = 70.8%); some participants declined to give their branch of service making it impossible to know the exact percentage of the sample population with military combat arms experience.

<sup>355</sup> According to interview participants with expert knowledge of PSC Human Resource practices, approximately 95% of armed contractors working for PSCs have national military training; on case-by-case bases, some PSCs accept personnel with paramilitary or police training (Interviews #6, 11, 19, and 21).

<sup>356</sup> (15 of 23 = 65.2%) One interview participant declined to comment on the number of PSCs he'd worked for.

<sup>357</sup> (15 of 24 = 62.5%) Some participants were in formal leadership positions for very short periods of time and did not feel comfortable discussing their experiences at these levels. In a manner compatible with constructivist research principles, the researcher and the interview participants made joint-decisions about participants' abilities to inform this research at different levels of authority.

high degree of mobility amongst contractors within the industry. This is relevant because these statistics support this thesis's assumption that labour mobility within the private security industry was high enough that a small sample size of experienced contractors could yield sufficient information to describe all levels of decision making authority within the British private security industry.<sup>358</sup> Exploring information at corporate, regional & country, project, and team & supervisor levels of authority helped to increase the comprehensiveness of the findings of this thesis.

The following charts show the regression analyses conducted to determine participants' mobility within the industry and within PSC hierarchies:

**"Multiple PSCs" Regression Statistics**

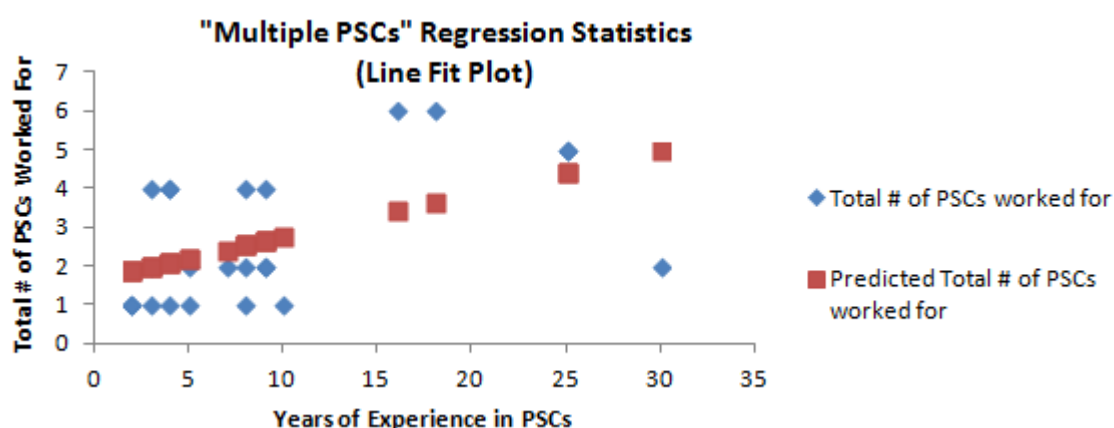
Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.511597
R Square	0.261732
Adjusted R Square	0.228174
Standard Error	1.503179
Observations	24

Summary	
$Y = 1.6616 + 0.1101 \cdot x$	After 1.66 years in the industry, participants are 11% more likely (per year) to change PSCs
$R^2 = 0.262$	But, only 26% of a participant's likelihood to change PSCs can be explained by years in the industry
$p = 0.00196$	p-values < 0.01 suggest a relationship between years in the industry and likelihood to change PSCs

**ANOVA**

	Degrees of Freedom (DF)	Sum of Squares (SS)	Mean Sum of Squares (MS)	Test Statistic (F)	Significance (F-Crit)
Regression	1	17.62327	17.62327	7.79946	0.01061
Residual	22	49.71007	2.25955		
Total	23	67.33333			

	Coefficients	Standard Error	T-Statistic	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95.0%	Upper 95.0%
Y-Intercept	1.66159	0.47293	3.51336	0.00196	0.68078	2.64240	0.68078	2.64240
Years of exp in PSCs	0.11015	0.03944	2.79275	0.01061	0.02835	0.19194	0.02835	0.19194



<sup>358</sup> P-values below 0.01 are considered 'significant.' These statistics show that a null hypothesis stating "there is no relationship in the data" is denied. In short, the P-values disprove that there is no relationship between 'years of experience' and 'multiple PSCs' or 'authority levels' (0.00196 and 0.00001 respectively); indicating that a relationship between 'years of experience' and 'multiple PSCs' or 'authority levels' does exist.



### "Authority Levels" Regression Statistics

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.53103
R Square	0.28200
Adjusted R Square	0.24936
Standard Error	0.78660
Observations	24

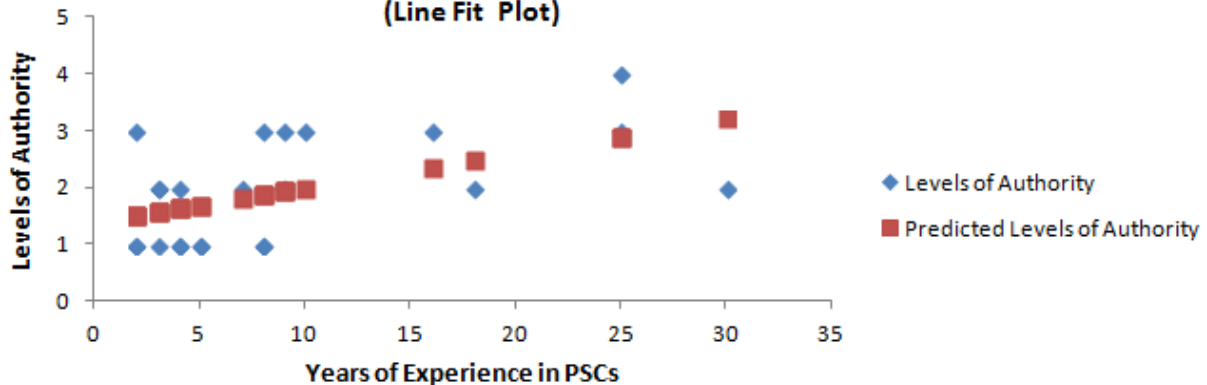
Summary	
$Y = 1.405 + 0.061 \times x$	After 1.4 years in the industry, participants are 6% more likely (per year) to change levels of authority
$R^2 = 0.282$	But, only 28% of a participant's likelihood to change authority levels can be explained by years in the industry
$p = 0.00001043$	p-values < 0.01 suggest a relationship between years in the industry and likelihood to change levels of authority

### ANOVA

	Degrees of Freedom (DF)	Sum of Squares (SS)	Mean Sum of Squares (MS)	Test Statistic (F)	Significance (F-Crit)
Regression	1	5.34619	5.34619	8.64054	0.00758
Residual	22	13.61214	0.61873		
Total	23	18.95833			

	Coefficients	Standard Error	T-Statistic	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95.0%	Upper 95.0%
Intercept	1.40476	0.24748	5.67622	0.00001	0.89151	1.91800	0.89151	1.91800
Years of exp in PSCs	0.06067	0.02064	2.93948	0.00758	0.01786	0.10347	0.01786	0.10347

### "Authority Levels" Regression Statistics (Line Fit Plot)



Finally, it is noteworthy that all of the interview participants were male. While there are females working at the corporate levels of PSCs, this thesis included only corporate-level interview participants who had (at some time) been co-located in hostile environments with the armed contractors that they were leading. Participating PSCs made an array of contractors available, however none were female. This is ostensibly due to the very low number of female PSC leaders operating in an armed capacity in hostile environments.<sup>359</sup> As a result, the sample population, even at corporate level, was skewed towards a male demographic. The findings of this thesis are therefore unlikely to directly inform gender issues in the private security industry.

<sup>359</sup> (Schulz & Yeung, 2008, p. 4)

## Summary of Coding Findings

Having described the coding process in detail in Chapter Three: *Methodology*, this section summarizes the findings of the three levels of coding (initial, focused, and theoretical) that were used to distil themes from data gathered primarily through semi-structured interviews. Each level of the coding process is discussed separately to maximize transparency. A more detailed discussion of the individual interview questions follows in the next section. The impact that ‘constant comparison analysis’ had on coding, the generation of themes, and the evolution of the semi-structured interview guide are also summarized in this section.

### Coding Phase I: Initial Coding

Initial coding was the first level of coding conducted during the research underlying this thesis. Initial coding identifies fundamental “analytic ideas to pursue in further data collection and analysis.”<sup>360</sup> More specifically, in constructivist GT research, initial coding categorizes actions and consequences shown in the data set to determine “what research participants view” as important.<sup>361</sup> Charmaz (2006) cautions researchers about jumping to preconceived conclusions during coding, stating that researchers have “tendencies to make conceptual leaps” or “to adopt extant theories before [doing] the necessary analytic work” during initial coding.<sup>362</sup> To mitigate this risk, this thesis’s research examined data from the perspective of research participants (rather than theorists) at the outset. Because the purpose of GT research is not to test, replicate, or verify existing theories, using existing theories to interpret new data hinders GT research by introducing theoretical bias into the analytical process.<sup>363</sup> Initial codes were established using a ‘line-by-line’ technique to “reveal visibly telling and consequential scenes and actions.”<sup>364</sup> Alternative initial coding techniques included word-by-word, segment-by-segment, and incident-by-incident coding.<sup>365</sup> Word-by-word coding was determined to be too time consuming while segment-by-segment and incident-by-incident coding was determined to be less accurate. The ‘line-by-line’ technique

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<sup>360</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 46–50; Glaser, 1992, p. 40)

<sup>361</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, p. 47)

<sup>362</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, p. 48)

<sup>363</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, p. 5)

<sup>364</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, p. 50)

<sup>365</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, p. 51)

helped this thesis's research to achieve the highest level of accuracy (reasonably) possible during coding. NVivo10 software assisted in cataloguing the initial codes and the software was used to determine the frequency and prevalence of initial codes within the 24 interview texts.

In the first phase of coding, initial codes were generated across the full array of interview transcripts. It is noteworthy that initial codes were not generated *according to* each individual interview question. Such a technique would force data into pre-determined lines of inquiry. Also, due to time constraints and other factors, all of the interviews did not include the same questions.<sup>366</sup> GT calls for coding to be done without regard for existing theories or categorizations. Some GT fundamentalists might also criticize the decision to organize codes according to a template; even a template based on a purpose-built Interview Guide. The first phase of coding led to the creation of 2,538 relevant initial codes that provided unexpected information insofar as some of these codes enlightened this thesis beyond what was originally intended. Coding twice (once with and once without consideration for the Interview Guide), ensured that all Interview Guide questions were fully answered and that any 'extra' data that did not address specific Interview Guide questions was also captured and analyzed. Some initial codes were discarded due to lack of relevancy, which stemmed from low frequencies of occurrence or failures to provide information useful to answering the thesis's questions. The list of relevant initial codes is too long to publish in this thesis; however, the absence of the list does not detract from the findings. The most salient initial codes can be identified from the focused codes discussed in the following section.

*In vivo* codes are codes generated from "special terms" used by research participants that have no meaning out of context.<sup>367</sup> Identifying *in vivo* codes requires researchers to understand the special meanings that participants ascribe to these terms. Understanding *in vivo* codes enables researchers to better identify and understand themes generated in subsequent coding phases. The following chart shows four *in vivo* codes identified during the initial coding phase that have special meaning and significance within this thesis.

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<sup>366</sup> (Barbour, 2001, p. 1116; Glaser, 1992, p. 12)

<sup>367</sup> (Charmaz, 2006, p. 56; Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 65))

Relevant <i>In Vivo</i> Codes			
#	Code:	Definition:	Thematic Significance:
1	“Walter Mitty”	Person falsely claiming to have experiences or skills	Suggests a person has “reinvented” himself upon leaving service and becoming a PSC contractor. This term was used pejoratively 100% of the time. <sup>368</sup>
2	“mercenary” (with a small “m”)	A violent and selfish contractor who does not willingly adhere to rules or norms	Many contractors self-identify as skilled professionals who adhere to codes of conduct. “Mercenary” refers to a particularly aggressive “out-group.” The term was understood to be pejorative at least 40% of the time and as much as 100% of the time. <sup>369</sup>
3	“The Big Picture”	The total range of factors that impact upon PSC operations	Factors included the commercial goals of PSCs, clients, and LNs partners; also the local, regional, and global socio-political environments that affect PSCs, clients, and LNs. <sup>370</sup>
4	“LN(s)”	Local National(s)	“LN” appeared to be used as more than just an abbreviation. The term was pointedly used to describe a ‘status’ or category of person characterized by lesser education and professional competencies at least 49% of the time. <sup>371</sup>

### Coding Phase II: Focused Coding

Focused coding was the second level of coding conducted for this thesis’s research. Following the initial coding phase, focused coding occurred over the course of 13 cycles of ‘constant comparative analysis.’ Focused coding condensed the 2,538 initial codes into 131 focused codes. To keep emerging themes organized, the initial codes were grouped according to the 12 core questions of the Interview Guide (as shown in subsequent sections below) only after all initial and focused coding was complete. These focused codes aggregated into 17 saturated categories that were useful for identifying unexpected information that further informed the thesis’s central question. Giske and Artinian’s conceptual mapping technique was referenced to assist in alerting the researcher to theoretical saturation.<sup>372</sup> During this phase of coding, some initial codes were eventually considered irrelevant due to low frequencies of occurrence or their failures to provide information useful to answering the thesis questions; these codes were discarded at the end of the focused coding phase.<sup>373</sup>

<sup>368</sup> (3 of 3 times = 100%) (Interviews #7, 10, 22) This term was used also used once by the researcher; the interview participant’s response demonstrated that he understood this term as pejorative (Interview #9).

<sup>369</sup> The term “mercenary” appeared 23 times (Interviews #3, 7, 9, 12). In interview #12, the participant voluntarily uses the term nine times in a pejorative tone (9 of 22 mentions = 40%). The participant went a step further to distinguish between “Mercenary” with a large “M” as a normal civilian’s description of a private security contractor and “mercenary” with a small “m” as the vilified, aggressive, money-driven, adventurer (Interview #12). In Interview #3, after the researcher suggested the term “mercenary” in a pejorative tone, the participant accepted and used the term as a pejorative label eight times (8 of 22 mentions = 36%). In interviews #7 and 9, the researcher again used the term in a pejorative tone and the participants’ responses suggested that they also understood the term to have a negative meaning.

<sup>370</sup> “The Big Picture” (or variations of the term) is referred to in interviews # 2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 17, 19, 21.

<sup>371</sup> (115 of 237 mentions = 48.5%)

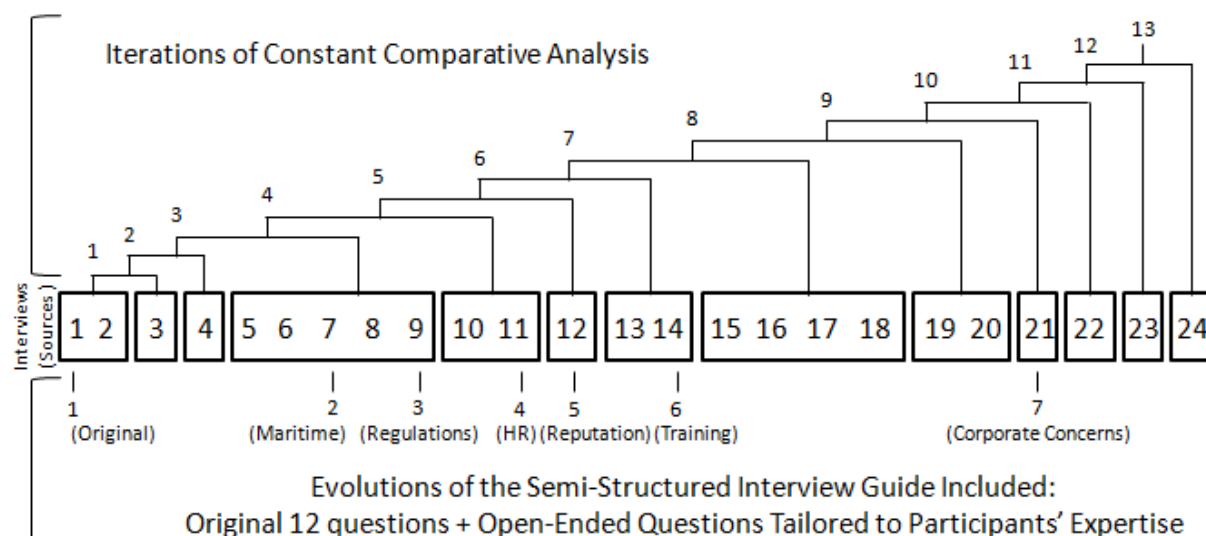
<sup>372</sup> (Giske & Artinian, 2007, p. 75)

<sup>373</sup> Focused coding “develop[s] the [research’s] most salient categories” by discarding codes that lack significant support and amalgamating codes that suggest greater themes (Charmaz, 2006, p. 46).

Categories were not considered to be ‘saturated’ (or nearing saturation) until they were referenced in at least three sources.<sup>374</sup> Glaser recommends waiting until at least three sources to guard against ignoring relevant information.<sup>375</sup> Themes were considered ‘saturated’ only when (a) they could be defined in terms of “properties, dimensions, and variations” and (b) further data gathering continued to reveal the existence of the theme without revealing anything new about it.<sup>376</sup> Other categories appeared relevant but were not recorded with a high enough frequency to be ‘saturated.’ Sandelowski cautions against making claims that cannot be supported by small sample sizes.<sup>377</sup> These unsaturated categories (discussed in the Chapter Eight: *Conclusion* in the section entitled *Recommendations for Future Research*) were not used to support the conclusions. A larger sample population may have allowed these categories to saturate.

As categories began to saturate, interviews were modified to more-quickly confirm results from previous interviews; thus allowing more time to explore new subject areas. The interview guide evolved a total of seven times, expanding to include questions about legal issues, maritime security, regulations, human resource practices, reputational risks, training, and corporate-level management concerns.

Some interviews had to be scheduled in rapid succession, thus it was not possible to conduct a constant comparative analysis after each interview. The following diagram depicts how and when constant comparative analysis and Interview Guide modifications were used in this thesis’s research:



<sup>374</sup> (3 of 24 > 13%)

<sup>375</sup> (Glaser, 1978, p. 20)

<sup>376</sup> (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 263)

<sup>377</sup> (Sandelowski, 1995, p. 189)

- Interviews (Sources): Numbers 1-24 through the middle of the diagram depict each of the 24 interviews conducted during this study.
- Iterations of Constant Comparative Analysis: Numbers 1-13 across the top of the diagram show the (blocks of) interviews that were included in each of the 13 rounds of constant comparative analysis. GT methodologies normally call for analyses to take place following each interview; however, during this study, some interviews occurred in rapid succession. There was not always time to compare new data with preceding data before having to conduct the next interview.
- Evolutions of the Semi-Structured Interview Guide: Numbers 1-7 across the bottom of the diagram show the points during the interview process where the Interview Guide evolved. For example, the first evolution took place at Interview #7: this interview quickly confirmed results from previous interviews to allow time to explore new areas related to private security contractors in maritime environments.

### Coding Phase III: Theoretical Coding

Theoretical coding was the third and final level of coding conducted for this thesis's research. Relationships between the 17 categories developed during focused coding were identified with help from Glaser's "18 coding families."<sup>378</sup> These relationships are expressed as narratives organized according to the three thesis sub-questions. Together, the narratives substantiate the concluding theoretical statements.<sup>379</sup>

### Validity and Reliability Check of the Coding Process

The three-phase coding process was assessed for validity and reliability according to two measures: (1) Researcher triangulation with inter-coder reliability determined at a 95% confidence level and (2) Respondent validation with accessible participants giving qualitative measures of agreement.

Researcher triangulation occurred with a second, experienced qualitative researcher<sup>380</sup> independently reviewing a 20% sample of the initial codes and a 100% sample of the focused and theoretical codes.<sup>381</sup> To determine the number of initial codes that had to be reviewed to obtain a statistically representative sample size, two formulas were used. One formula was used to first calculate the necessary sample size for any population. An additional formula

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<sup>378</sup> Charmaz (2006, p. 63) explains theoretical coding and how Glaser's (1978) 18 coding families can contribute to researchers' efforts.

<sup>379</sup> (Glaser, 1978, p. 74)

<sup>380</sup> Researcher triangulation was assisted by Britta Müller, a research fellow conducting statistical analyses at the Competence Center for Corporate Governance and Management (Hochschule für Ökonomie und Management).

<sup>381</sup> 26 focused codes comprised of 540 initial codes were independently reviewed. 26 focused codes out of a total of 131 focused codes = 19.8%. 540 initial codes out of 2,538 total initial codes = 21.3%.

was then used to refine the calculation according to the known population size specific (2,538 initial codes).<sup>382</sup> The formulas are as follows:

Formula for any population:

$$n_o = \frac{z^2 * (p) * (1-p)}{c^2}$$

Formula to refine calculations for known population size:

$$n = \frac{n_o}{1 + \frac{(n_o - 1)}{N}}$$

- $n_o$  = sample population size for a total population of unknown size
- $N$  = known population size
- $n$  = sample population size for a total population of known size
- $z$  = 1.96 for a 95% confidence level
- $p$  = percent chance of giving an answer (.5 is the most liberal figure representing “all-odds-as-equal”)
- $c$  = confidence interval (a range of accuracy expressed as +/- x %)

The calculations to determine the sample size for the population of initial codes were:

$$n_o = \frac{1.96^2 * (.5) * (1-.5)}{.0375^2} \quad n_o = 682 \quad n = \frac{682}{1 + \frac{(682 - 1)}{2538}} \quad n = 537.7 \quad (\text{Rounded to 540})$$

Researcher triangulation concerning the reliability of the initial codes yielded an agreement measure of 90%.<sup>383</sup> With a confidence interval of 3.75%, this result could be interpreted as: ‘given a randomly selected sample of 540 initial codes, there was a 95% chance (confidence level) that the second researcher agreed with between 86.25 – 93.75% of the primary researcher’s initial codes.’ Researcher triangulation concerning the reliability of the focused and theoretical codes yielded agreement measures of 90% and 100% respectively.<sup>384</sup> Because the sample population was 100% of the total population, the confidence interval was 0%. Therefore, there was a 100% chance (confidence level) that the second researcher agreed with 90% and 100% of the primary researcher’s focused and theoretical codes, respectively. According to Lombard et al., agreement “coefficients of 90% or greater are nearly always acceptable” and “80% or greater is acceptable in most situations.”<sup>385</sup> This thesis’s research had agreement measures of 86-94%, 90% and 100%, which suggest that coding was conducted in a reasonably bracketed manner according to reasonably unbiased standards. It

<sup>382</sup> (Israel, 1992, p. 3)

<sup>383</sup> The second researcher agreed with the usage of 486 of 540 reviewed initial codes. (486 / 540 = 90%)

<sup>384</sup> The second researcher agreed with the usage of 118 of 131 reviewed focused codes. (118 / 131 = 90%)

The second researcher agreed with the usage of 17 of 17 reviewed theoretical codes. (17 / 17 = 100%)

<sup>385</sup> (Lombard et al., 2002, p. 600)

is defensible to assume that coding errors which might exist in this thesis's research have not added to those weaknesses inherent to subjective social research coding processes, discussed at the end of Chapter Three.

Respondent validation occurred with as many participants as possible providing feedback on Chapter Five: *Analyses of Findings*. Mays and Pope caution that “account[s] produced by researchers are designed for a wide audience and will, inevitably, be different from the account of an individual informant simply because of their different roles in the research process.”<sup>386</sup> Respondent validation does however serve to reduce error and, according to Lincoln and Guba, respondent validation (“member checking”) is a “most crucial technique for establishing credibility.”<sup>387</sup> Two attempts were made to contact each of the original 24 research participants: nine participants responded and five were available and willing to participate in a validation review after the data was coded and analysed. Qualitative responses from the five participants indicated that they agreed with the findings of this thesis's research on a general level. Due to their unique expertise, several participants commented on the research's findings concerning HR, training, and corporate-level concerns. When asked about these specific aspects of the research's findings, participant responses continued to be favourable. Qualitative responses included unanimous ‘general agreement’ with some participants expanding on their previous comments to ensure their points were communicated clearly. These responses suggest that the data analysis procedures produced results that have some degree of validity and reliability.

#### Focused Coding Results: Organized by Interview Guide Question

This section is presented to illustrate the rigor underlying the first iteration of focused coding, whereby 2,538 initial codes were condensed into 131 focused codes.<sup>388</sup> The focused codes presented here are arranged according to the 12 core questions of the semi-structured interview guide (as discussed in Chapter Three: *Methodology* and Appendix C: *Interview Guide*) in order to keep emerging themes organized and to pointedly address the planned questions inherent to this thesis. All 12 questions were not answered by all interview participants due to variations in the time allowed for each interview; also, the interview guide

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<sup>386</sup> (Mays & Pope, 2000, p. 51)

<sup>387</sup> (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 314–315)

<sup>388</sup> Focused coding “pinpoint[s] and develop[s] the most salient categories” determined during the initial coding phase. Some initial codes that are not supported by subsequent data collection are discarded while repeatedly-present initial codes are either turned into stand-alone categories or amalgamated into more-encompassing categories (Charmaz, 2006, p. 46).



evolved to expand the breadth of the research as categories became saturated. Throughout this section, brief explanations of important findings are given to ensure that the links between findings and analyses (discussed in Chapter Five) are readily apparent.

### Interview Guide Question 1

“Please describe your role and primary responsibilities.”

The quantifiable responses to this open-ended question can be seen in the Participant Demographics chart (discussed in the previous section). The column labelled *Levels of Authority* depicts the hierarchical levels (roles) experienced by each participant. In addition to quoting their company-appointed job titles and descriptions, many participants chose to expand upon their understanding of leadership by explaining various roles and responsibilities in their own words. The qualitative responses to this question provided information about the drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors who are operating in hostile environments by revealing the range of responsibilities that contractors believed leaders (themselves and others) were obliged to uphold.<sup>389</sup>

Question one was addressed by all 24 participants; 22 focused codes were generated and these codes were referenced 412 times (see charts below): an average of 17.2 responses per participant, which was the highest response rate (per participant) of all of the Interview Guide questions. This question’s response rate was nearly 50% higher than that of the second highest response rate suggesting that interview participants believed the responsibilities inherent to leadership roles were of very high importance.<sup>390</sup> Question one was also unique in that it elicited the highest number of responses pertaining to specific levels of decision-making authority; while some responsibilities were inherent to all leaders, many participants believed that other responsibilities were more pronounced at specific levels. Because of the range of responses generated by this question, the focused codes for ‘roles and responsibilities’ are presented here in two sections: those inherent to ‘specific leadership levels’ and those inherent to ‘all leadership levels.’

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<sup>389</sup> Symbolic interactionism, discussed in the subsequent chapter, suggests that leaders’ ideological constructions of leadership roles and responsibilities affect leaders’ motivations (Blumer, 1969, p. 2).

<sup>390</sup> The second highest response rate was for question 7 which averaged 11.8 responses per participant. The response rate for question #1 was more than double the average response rate for all questions (which was 8.6).

## Roles and Responsibilities Inherent to ‘Specific Leadership Levels’

In total, 96% of respondents emphasized responsibilities inherent to specific levels of decision-making authority.<sup>391</sup> This reported percentage came from a combination of participants who believed it was important to specify the responsibilities inherent to their own level of decision-making authority<sup>392</sup> and participants who also specified responsibilities inherent to other peoples’ levels of decision-making authority.<sup>393</sup> The following table shows the distribution of participant responses:

Q1 - Roles & Responsibilities																
Inter-view #	Personal Level of Exp	Participants Described Responsibilities at these Levels:							Inter-view #	Personal Level of Exp	Participants Described Responsibilities at these Levels:					
1	T, P	C	R	P	P/T	T	HR		13	T, P	C	R	P	P/T	T	
2	T, P		R	P	P/T	T			14	T, P, C		R	P	P/T	T	HR
3	R	C			P/T	T			15	T			P		T	
4	R			P		T	HR		16	T				P/T		
5	P	C			P/T				17	P, R, C	C			P/T	T	
6	C	C							18	P, R, C	C					
7	C	C		P		T			19	R, C		R	P	P/T	T	
8	P, R			P		T			20	T, P				P/T	T	
9	P, R, C	C	R	P	P/T				21	T, P, R	C	R	P	P/T	T	
10	T, P, R, C	C	R	P	P/T	T			22	P					T	
11	P, C	C			P/T		HR		23	C						
12	P, R, C		R		P/T				24	T, C				P	T	

- Levels of decision-making authority within most PSCs include: T = Team; P = Project; R = Regional or country; and C = Corporate. The codes (T, P, R, C) annotated in the column “Personal Level of Exp” show the levels at which participants had personal experience (T = 10; P = 15; R = 10; C = 12).
- Participants described responsibilities at their personal levels of experience *and* at other levels of decision-making authority (T, P, R, C). Human Resource managers (who could be at project, regional, or corporate level) were singled out four times as having special roles and responsibilities (HR = Human Resources).

From this table and the following table that summarizes the focused codes for responsibilities at specific leadership levels, it is possible to see that project and team level responsibilities were reported most frequently.<sup>394</sup> Although the majority of the respondents (53%) had experience working at project and team levels, they were a majority by only a very

<sup>391</sup> (23 of 24 participants = 95.8%)

<sup>392</sup> Question one’s pointed phrasing directed all participants to describe their own roles and responsibilities; nearly all participants (20 of 24 = 83%) went on to describe the general responsibilities inherent to all leaders at their level of decision-making authority.

<sup>393</sup> 20 of 24 participants (83%) described the responsibilities inherent to levels of decision-making authority other than their own.

<sup>394</sup> Of the commentary that pertained to specific levels of responsibility, 6 of 10 focused codes (60%) pertained to project and team levels; 56 of 82 sources (68%) pertained to project and team levels; and 145 of 207 references (70%) pertained to project and team levels.

slight margin;<sup>395</sup> thus, a skewing of data towards the project and team levels was observable: a disproportionate amount of attention was given to project and team level responsibilities.

Interview Guide - Question 1 (n = 23)			
Focused Codes:			
Code	Q1 – Please describe your role and responsibilities...	# of Sources	# of refs
<b>...inherent to specific leadership levels</b>			
1	Corporate leader activities must support project leaders	10	27
2	Corporate leaders must vet their clients	3	4
3	Regional & country leaders must support project personnel	9	23
4	Regional & project leaders must evaluate policies and supervise adherence to policies <sup>396</sup>	9	17
5	Project leaders must ensure they have support from higher levels to defend their decisions	4	9
6	Project and team leaders must train and mentor others in order to build successful teams	17	46
7	Team leaders must motivate and control men with very strong personalities	13	35
8	Team leaders must delegate tasks and personally supervise adherence to standards	8	19
9	Team leaders must embody and enforce high standards of self-discipline and physical fitness	5	19
10	Leaders in human resource management positions must recruit quality contractors	4	8

A second trend in the level-specific data was that respondents discussed many of the project and team level responsibilities in terms of ‘what leaders should do,’ while corporate and regional responsibilities were more often discussed in terms of ‘what leaders fail to do.’

Combined, these two trends suggest that there may be an emphasis within the industry on the roles and responsibilities of project and team leaders; however, the sample population for this research was selected for its diversity rather than its representativeness of the overall population of PSC leaders.<sup>397</sup> Thus, while it is interesting that a diverse sample population agreed on several specific leadership responsibilities, the sample size (n = 24) is too small to determine the extent of any agreement. Subsequently, the data mined from question one is insufficient to determine the true strengths or weaknesses of corporate or regional leaders. The focused codes generated during this thesis’ analyses are relevant only in that they reveal the range of responsibilities perceived by PSC leaders. The range of responsibilities is discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

<sup>395</sup> 53% of participants had experience working at project or team levels. This was determined by calculating: (T10 + P15) divided by (T10 + P15 + R10 + C12) = 53%

<sup>396</sup> Regional and project leaders might evaluate policies according to different criteria; for example: regional leaders might assess the political or legal impact of policies while project leaders might assess the impact that policies may have on clients, operations, or LN labour.

<sup>397</sup> The adequacy of a theoretical sample stems from its diversity (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 63). GT aims to generalize research findings to concepts, not people (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 9).

## Roles and Responsibilities Inherent to ‘All Leadership Levels’

All respondents discussed responsibilities inherent to all or multiple levels of decision-making authority.<sup>398</sup> The following table shows the distribution of participant responses:

Interview Guide - Question 1 (n = 24)			
Focused Codes		# of sources	# of refs
Code	Q1 – Please describe your role and responsibilities...	24	205
...inherent to all leadership levels			
11	All leaders must empower subordinates by listening and allowing them to influence outcomes	15	31
12	All leaders must understand how their roles and the roles of others relate to 'the big picture'	12	36
13	All leaders must select the correct people for positions	12	15
14	All leaders must proactively supervise the ethical behaviour of subordinates	9	20
15	All leaders must be 'team players,' facilitating team cohesion and team efforts	9	17
16	All leaders must consistently set positive examples for others to follow	8	18
17	All leaders must support contractors' morale	8	18
18	All leaders must educate clients	8	13
19	All leaders must ensure the successful delivery of services	6	13
20	All leaders must coordinate operations, in support of lower echelons	6	9
21	All leaders must ensure the health and safety of contractors	5	8
22	All leaders must keep the company profitable	5	7

Several of the focused codes pertaining to ‘all leadership levels’ were similar to those pertaining to ‘specific leadership levels;’ the primary difference was simply that some respondents were more specific than others in attributing responsibility. In the thematic coding phase, focused codes #1-22 were relevant in that they helped determine drivers of ethical behaviour.

### Interview Guide Question 2

“What are the critical tasks or concerns that seem to require the most attention?”

The qualitative responses that pertained to this open-ended question provided information about how leaders perceived their and others’ responsibilities. This information was relevant in that it helped to identify the drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments. Because this thesis conducted theoretical sampling (seeking a range of information rather than statistically representative information), this data was not relevant for determining the priorities of PSC leaders; critical tasks or concerns that were mentioned more

<sup>398</sup> (24 of 24 participants = 100%)

often were not necessarily more important. Question two was addressed by 21 participants; 8 focused codes were generated and these codes were referenced 186 times; an average of 8.9 responses per participant.

Interview Guide - Question 2 (n = 21)			
Focused Codes		# of sources	# of refs
Code	Q2 – What are the critical tasks or concerns that seem to require the most attention?	21	186
23	Liaising daily with clients, LNs, contractors, and other leaders is a critical task	14	27
24	Managing cultural and professional differences between Expats, TCNs, and LNs is a critical task	13	37
25	Ensuring that team-level training is current is a critical task for some leaders and a critical concern for others	11	35
26	Ensuring client safety is a critical concern	11	21
27	Costs, profits, and loses are critical concerns for both PSCs and client companies	11	19
28	Ensuring contractor welfare, within the confines of profitability, is a critical concern	10	20
29	Ensuring client satisfaction is a critical concern	10	16
30	Winning and retaining business is a critical concern	6	11

The table for Q2 shows that PSC leaders tend to dedicate their time to addressing categories of concern as opposed to repetitively executing specific, directed tasks. The terminology and phrasing of many of the interviews suggested that PSC leaders at all levels had freedom of action and that their supervisors expected them to exhibit degrees of initiative during day-to-day operations. The following paragraphs describe the focused codes in greater detail. These details were relevant to identifying and understanding the relationships between focused codes that were found during the third coding phase: theoretical coding.

Managing human relationships, including relationships between Local Nationals (LNs), contractors, and clients of all nationalities was an expressed task for the majority of interview participants. “Liaising” between these groups generally entailed coordinating efforts and actions, while “managing differences” generally entailed managing expectations and conducting counseling to resolve disputes. PSC leaders’ understandings of both “liaising” and “managing differences” informed PSC leaders’ perceptions of their roles in PSCs and enabled PSC leaders to fulfil those roles.

Team and project-level leaders were expressly tasked with ensuring that team-level training was current and verifiable. Many leaders above team and project-level considered training to be a principal concern that merited their time and supervision. The importance of team-level training was referenced 15 times; the importance of Security Industry Authority (SIA) and project level supervision was referenced seven times. With regard to specific types of training, weapons and tactical training was referenced as important 15 times; interpersonal,

professional, and regulations-based training was referenced six times; mission planning and computer training was referenced three times; and medical and fitness training were referenced two times each. Despite many references to training, no interview participants mentioned training requirements outside of the team level; this was relevant during analyses in that it seemed to corroborate some participants' concerns that there should be greater training requirements for regional and corporate-level leadership.

The next five focused codes, discussed below, are relevant because they provide information that is useful for analyzing the organizational objectives of PSCs. Understanding the organizational objectives of PSCs, as they are perceived by PSC leaders, is fundamentally important to analyzing the drivers of ethical behaviour. Client safety, business concerns, contractor welfare, and client satisfaction all merited leader attention.

Client safety was referenced as a critical concern by 11 participants; four participants expanded upon their answers to describe the importance of safety in detail.<sup>399</sup> Although four participants noted that safety was a main decision-driver, two participants stated that, to some degree, the priority of a mission could affect the risk tolerance of both clients and PSCs. One participant noted that PSCs that do not prioritize the safety of their clients will almost assuredly run into legal problems. Safety concerns also had an impact on interpretations of Rules of the Use of Force (RUF) (two references); and safety measures could be positively or negatively influenced by what clients were willing to pay (three references).

Eleven PSC corporate leaders stated that monitoring costs, profits, and losses (P&L) required a significant amount of their attention. Three PSC corporate leaders suggested that their clients (and corporate leaders in all industries) were naturally, equally concerned about business finances. Two project-level leaders also identified the upkeep of P&L as a critical concern.

Ensuring contractor welfare was reported as a critical concern by project and team leaders. It is noteworthy that no regional or corporate level managers identified "contractor welfare" as a major time or attention-consuming concern. Four project leaders and three team leaders defined "welfare" in terms of "safety" while eight project leaders and five team leaders defined "welfare" in terms of "morale."

Ensuring client satisfaction was noted as an important concern by 10 separate participants. While most participants did not specify exactly what "good" comes from client satisfaction, five participants stated that legal and financial troubles stem from dissatisfied

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<sup>399</sup> Interviews #13, 15, 16, and 17 expanded on their answers, giving double or more detail on this subject than the other seven participants who reported client safety as being a critical concern.

clients. Three participants noted that communication was important to mitigating client disappointment suggesting that disappointment was a major driver of dissatisfaction.

Finally, six participants specifically stated that winning and retaining business was an attention-consuming concern. Several participants noted that “above and beyond” service delivery was a key component of winning and retaining business. This matches to statements made by respondents who identified client satisfaction and daily client liaison as critical tasks and concerns.

Much of the information discovered from Q2 was relevant to analyses in Chapter Five in that it helped to identify PSC personnel’s understandings of PSCs’ organizational objectives. This understanding was important in light of the potential and consequences of confusing PSCs’ missions with those of militaries. The information relevant to Q2 helped to inform the first driver of ethical behaviour (‘PSC personnel’s understandings of security in a commercial context’), discussed in detail in the next chapter.

### Interview Guide Question 3

“In your experience, what are the most common ethical challenges inherent to operating in a hostile environment?”

The qualitative responses that pertained to this open-ended question provided information about the negative pressures that contractors in hostile environments might face; pressures that impede ethical decision-making. This information was helpful in identifying factors that negatively influence the drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments. Question three was addressed by 23 participants; 11 focused codes were generated and these codes were referenced 169 times; an average of 7.3 responses per participant.

Interview Guide - Question 3 (n = 23)			
Focused Codes		# of sources	# of refs
Code	Q3 – In your experience, what are the most common ethical challenges inherent to operating in a hostile environment?	23	169
31	Keeping military and private security behavioural norms separate is an ethical challenge	13	38
32	Maintaining control over aggressive contractors is an ethical challenge	11	29
33	Managing LN cultural and professional differences is an ethical challenge	9	20
34	Teaching Western ethical standards to TCNs and LNs is an ethical challenge	9	11
35	Having no alternative but to manage contractors with sub-standard skills is an ethical challenge	8	19
36	Submitting honest training and expense reports, even when it may upset leaders, is an ethical challenge	7	12
37	Fairly disciplining contractors is an ethical challenge	6	7
38	Keeping military and private security images separate is an ethical challenge	5	12
39	Sourcing equipment legally, under time pressure, is an ethical challenge	5	8
40	Delivering agreed-upon service standards, despite client and company pressures, is an ethical challenge	4	8
41	Motivating and empowering others with very little reward power to rely on is an ethical challenge	4	5

The table for Q3 shows that PSC leaders reported that maintaining control over contractor behaviour was the most commonly occurring ethical challenge. The most prominent codes (#31 and #32) specifically addressed behaviours while codes #37, 38, and 41 related to professional and disciplinary standards that influence behaviour. A detailed understanding of the focused codes related to Q3 helped to explain some of the causes and consequences of ethical challenges; this information was relevant for discussing the drivers of ethical behaviour and how leadership can affect those drivers. The following paragraphs describe each focused code in greater detail.

Two codes (#31 and #38) identified the separation of military and private security behavioural norms and images as an ethical challenge. Both of these codes pertained to ensuring that people (both contractors and outsiders) understand that militaries and PSCs are different organizations with different mandates and purposes. Twelve respondents noted that when PSCs adopt para-military uniforms and markings, or when they operate “hand-in-glove” with militaries, then PSCs undermine their own neutrality and present themselves as legitimate military targets in hostile environments. This behaviour, in turn, creates additional risk for clients as PSCs draw additional hostile attention. Two respondents noted that popular media has exacerbated problems by exaggerating and inaccurately dramatizing PSC activities. Focused codes #31 and #38 provided details and specific examples of how understandings (and misunderstandings) can be shaped and controlled by leaders; these two codes contributed to identifying the first driver of ethical behaviour, discussed in detail in the next chapter.



Maintaining control over contractors' behaviour was reported by 11 participants as an important challenge; despite that much of the supporting evidence for this challenge addressed situations from the 2005 – 2006 timeframe. While mitigating factors have been put into place since that era,<sup>400</sup> participants suggested that the “slope” was still “slippery” and that that era could return. Words and phrases used to describe unwanted contractors and behaviours included: “psychopaths,” “lunatics,” “blatantly out-of-place,” “flashes at the first thing,” “mercenary types,” “aggressive,” “rogue individuals,” “trigger-happy,” “volatile,” “avenging 9-11,” “bloody cowboys,” “fucking feral,” “outright murderers,” and “Walter Mittys.” Six participants noted that unwanted PSC personnel must be identified and quickly terminated from employment; also there was a requirement for contractors to be “very strongly controlled” (eight references). Leadership must be “very strong” (five references); well-informed (four references); ethical (three references); and experienced (two references). Focused code #32 provided specific examples of some PSC leaders' attitudes towards unwanted personnel and the dangers of failing to control (or oust) such people; these examples helped to explain how certain negative influences can detract from PSC personnel's motivations to uphold their responsibilities.

The remaining focused codes pertaining to Q3 (discussed below) provided information relevant to understanding how certain people and environmental factors can cause or exacerbate ethical challenges within PSCs. Understanding the array of ethical challenges inherent to PSC operations was prerequisite to understanding how leadership skills and behaviours might help leaders to impact on ethical behaviour. Local Nationals (LNs), poorly-trained contractors, and demanding supervisors all contributed to creating ethical challenges.

Nine participants mentioned that managing Local National (LN) cultural and professional differences was a commonly occurring challenge; the crux of the challenge was to manage quality and expectations without lowering performance standards. Many factors were reported to add to the challenge, including that: LN accountability in terms of both supervision and documentation was low (five references); LN discipline was low (four references); LN training was lacking (four references); LN business customs and norms were

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<sup>400</sup> Some examples of mitigating factors put in place in Iraq since 2006 include: the dissolution of CPA Order 17, which gave contractors immunity from Iraqi laws or regulations; the establishment of the Armed Contractor Oversight Division, which monitored, reviewed, and reported PSC incidents; and increasing reporting requirements to Contractor Operations Cells (CONOCs) (Isenberg, 2010). These steps arguably increased coalition control over PSCs in Iraq. At the international level (despite the code's limited authority) the publishing of the ICoC arguably established behavioural norms for the private security industry worldwide (ICRC, 2010). The impact of these control measures on the private security industry in Iraq is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six: *Discussion of Other Empirical Evidence*.

corrupt (two references); and that LN conflict resolution techniques were sometimes unfair and violent (one reference).

Teaching LNs (and TCNs) about Western ethical standards was cited as a challenge related to managing cultural and professional differences. Some of the challenge stemmed from expats having a difficult time understanding the ethical codes and standards being handed down to them from higher (two references). Teaching LNs about Western standards was also challenging because most LNs did not care to understand the material (four references) and because LN culture seemed to dominate and block their understanding of foreign ethical frameworks (three references).

Managing contractors with sub-standard technical and tactical skills was cited as an ethical challenge that resulted from many contractors not being as skilled as they say or think they are (10 references). Often having few resources available and little or no reward power, some leaders felt challenged to motivate contractors to improve their performances (four references); PSCs that placed contractors into positions for reasons other than professional merit compounded the ethical challenges of leaders (four references). There were important similarities between challenges stemming from incentive structures and challenges related to motivating and empowering contractors.

Some leaders noted that it was, at times, a challenge to submit honest reports to clients, inspectors, and higher level leaders within their PSCs (two general references). Six references cited pressures to submit dishonest training reports and three references cited pressures to submit dishonest expense reports.

Finally, four participants cited challenges related to delivering agreed-upon service standards. Obligations to clients, as outlined in service agreements or contracts, sometimes conflicted with leaders' obligations to maximize the profit margins of their PSCs (three references), with leaders' obligations to consider the larger social consequences of their behaviour (two references), and with clients' changing or immediate wishes (one reference). Additional challenges could arise when leaders had to balance current contracts (delivering current profits) with opportunities to garner the future good will of clients (which could deliver future profit).

Much of the information relevant to Q3 contributed to a more-detailed explanation of the detractors from PSC personnel's personal motivations to behave ethically. Identifying and understanding detractors was important because these detractors make up the obstacles that leadership must overcome if leadership is to have a positive influence on ethical behaviour. Q3 helped to inform the third driver of ethical behaviour ('PSC personnel's personal

motivations to fulfil responsibilities inherent to their roles’), discussed in detail in the next chapter.

#### Interview Guide Question 4

“Have ethical challenges changed over time or as you’ve moved into new positions?”

The qualitative responses that pertained to this open-ended question helped to separate historical pressures from current pressures within the industry. Establishing a sense of time allowed this thesis to better establish causes and effects between leadership skills and behaviours and ethical behaviour; this was, in turn, helpful in identifying some of the drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments. Question four was addressed by 20 participants; 9 focused codes were generated and these codes were referenced 150 times; an average of 7.5 responses per participant.

Interview Guide - Question 4 (n = 20)			
Focused Codes			
Code	Q4 – Have ethical challenges changed over time or as you’ve moved into new positions?	# of sources	# of refs
		20	150
42	Ethical challenges have diminished as regulatory systems have matured	13	40
43	Ethical challenges have changed as partnerships with TCN-LN companies have affected behaviours and standards	13	27
44	Ethical challenges have diminished as contractors have gained training, experience, and social awareness	10	18
45	Ethical challenges have changed as expat labour has decreased in favour of cheaper, less-skilled LN labour	8	12
46	Ethical challenges have diminished as contractors developed long-term career intentions	7	23
47	Ethical challenges have diminished as threat levels in major markets have decreased	7	8
48	Ethical challenges have diminished as PSCs have moved away from military behaviours, towards civilian behaviours	5	10
49	Ethical challenges have changed as commercial clients have begun to outnumber government clients	5	7
50	Ethical challenges have changed as many PSCs have consolidated decision-making at corporate level	3	5

The table for Q4 shows that most PSC leaders believed that ethical challenges have not remained static over time: they have changed in some ways and, on balance, have possibly diminished. The following paragraphs describe each focused code in greater detail. Understanding the details of each focused code for Q4 made it possible to analyse changes to ethical challenges and to determine which changes might have been occurred due to leadership-related factors.

The greatest change to the ethical challenges inherent to the private security industry appears to have come from the introduction and evolution of regulation. More than 50% of the interview participants noted that regulations had, to some extent, lessened the total number of ethical challenges faced by PSC leaders at all levels. Seventeen references indicated that the industry has become increasingly regulated over time and 15 references indicated that regulations were being enforced. Compliance with regulations is incentivized insofar as ‘compliance wins business’ (three references) and regulation begets stability; winning business and fostering stability also attracts quality contractors (four references). These findings suggest that regulatory efforts have had a noticeable, positive impact on the ethical behaviour of PSCs. The benefits of regulatory efforts, the limitations of those benefits, and the relationships between regulation and leadership are discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

Ethical challenges have also changed as partnerships have changed: PSCs have become multi-national companies with regards to their employees, sub-contractors and clients. This has exposed PSCs to a variety of new legal structures that all impact upon PSC operations (eight references). Different cultures accept different operating standards (11 references) and respond differently to codes of conduct (five references).

Regulation, legal structures, and standard operating procedures (noted in the two paragraphs above) are all authoritative constructs; changes to ethical challenges that stem from these constructs are thus, arguably, leadership-driven changes making these focused codes important to informing this thesis. These focused codes were especially relevant to understanding how and why regulations impact on ethical behaviour; and it was relevant to understanding differences between ‘the existence of regulations’ and ‘the processes inherent to creating and enforcing regulations.’

Some ethical challenges have become less difficult to resolve as Western contractors have gained training (two references), experience (seven references), and social awareness (nine references). Simultaneously, contractors and PSCs have moved away from problematic military behaviours, towards more socially-acceptable non-military behaviours which allow them to operate more effectively in civilian environments. However, the rise of LN labour within the market has created new challenges (eight references) that, in some ways, off-set the gains made by developing Western contractors. Cheaper, less-skilled LNs may or may not rigorously adhere to or enforce standards (two references) and many expats may or may not

have the relationship-management skills required to mentor and lead LN labour forces (one reference).<sup>401</sup>

Finally, seven participants put a relatively strong focus on the long-term career intentions of contractors. Over time, the private security industry has proven itself to be an enduring industry and contractors have begun to value career opportunities that have been made available to those who are willing to evolve with the needs of the industry. These seven participants asserted that career-intentions have positively affected ethical behaviour; improved ethical behaviour has, in turn, diminished the ethical challenges leaders faced.

Much of the information relevant to Q4 contributed to a more-detailed understanding of how and why ethical challenges have changed over time. Identifying and understanding these changes was an important part of determining the magnitude of the impact of leadership on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel.

#### Interview Guide Question 5

“How much importance do others (clients, colleagues, other PSC leaders) seem to assign to ethical behaviour?”

The qualitative responses that pertained to this open-ended question helped to identify how leaders appear to rank the importance of “ethical behaviour” relative to other priorities such as profit and operational effectiveness. The question addressed contractors’ perceptions of others’ understandings of leadership responsibilities. By asking subordinates to comment on their leaders’ behaviour, it became possible to compare self-perceptions with external perceptions. It also allowed some insight into how ethical behaviour might be measured within the PSC industry. This was helpful in identifying the drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments. It is important to note that although the question asked participants to measure the importance that others seem to assign to ethical behaviour, the data from this question is not sufficient to determine actual, industry-wide ethical priorities. Due to the non-representative nature of theoretical sampling, the findings of this thesis cannot be extrapolated beyond the sample population.

Question five was addressed by 19 participants; 5 focused codes were generated and these codes were referenced 108 times; an average of 5.7 responses per participant.

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<sup>401</sup> (Interview #5)

Interview Guide - Question 5 (n = 19)			
Focused Codes			# of sources
Code	Q5 – How much importance do others (clients, colleagues, other PSC leaders) seem to assign to ethical behaviour?	19	108
51	PSCs value, protect, and market their reputations; which are influenced by 'ethical' behaviour	15	36
52	Contractors value their reputations amongst what is normally a close-knit peer group	11	20
53	Ethical business models are the only sustainable, profitable business models	11	17
54	Profit is an important priority for PSC leaders; but profit is dependent on reputation	9	14
55	Clients value their reputations and will readily disown PSCs for unacceptable behaviour	8	21

The table for Q5 shows that participants perceived their leaders (and their clients' leaders) to be most concerned with their personal reputations and the reputations of their companies. 'Reputation' was directly linked to adhering to ethical norms and standards; 'reputation' was also directly linked to marketability and profit. As such, 'behaving ethically' can be considered (to some unknown degree) important to both PSC leaders and PSCs' client leaders. From the interview data, it was not possible to determine whether PSC leaders believed "reputation" or "profit" was most important. Most literature defining "commercial business" suggests that "profit" should be a PSC leader's top priority;<sup>402</sup> however nine participants suggested that "reputation" is much more difficult to maintain and the pursuit of profit is futile if reputation is not a company's first consideration.

The information relevant to Q5 helped to identify some of the control mechanisms leveraged by decision-makers; and the means by which decision-makers seek to achieve their goals. Q5 helped to inform the second driver of ethical behaviour ('PSC personnel's understandings of their personal roles in establishing an ethical climate'), discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

#### Interview Guide Question 6

"Which practices or policies (if any) most clearly reveal the priority that a company (or client) places on ethical behaviour?"

The qualitative responses that pertained to this open-ended question helped to identify which actions, behaviours, policies, and practices were influencing participants' beliefs about the priority that companies or leaders were placing on ethical behaviour. These responses were helpful in identifying the drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile

<sup>402</sup> Commercial businesses are institutions that "concentrate their attention on their financial or physical resources" (Bass, 2008, p. 727). Commercial goals tend to be profit-oriented regardless of industry.

environments. Question six was addressed by 22 participants; 12 focused codes were generated and these codes were referenced 142 times: an average of 6.5 responses per participant.

Interview Guide - Question 6 (n = 22)			
Focused Codes			# of sources
Code	Q6 – Which practices or policies (if any) most clearly reveal the priority that a company (or client) places on ethical behaviour?	22	# of refs
56	Treating subordinates, clients, and LNs fairly and honestly reveals ethical priorities	10	27
57	Codifying policies and agreements to ethical codes, standards, and SOPs reveals ethical priorities	10	18
58	Deploying and recalling leaders to personally oversee compliance reveals ethical priorities	8	19
59	Fostering a climate of accountability reveals ethical priorities	8	14
60	Consideration for the welfare of contractors reveals ethical priorities	7	11
61	Striving to work within ethical frameworks despite “grey” legal frameworks reveals ethical priorities	7	10
62	Encouraging regular discussion of ethical standards reveals ethical priorities	7	8
63	Rejecting corruption, even when it benefits your company, reveals ethical priorities	7	7
64	Committing resources to promote ethical behaviour reveals ethical priorities	6	9
65	Self-policing to attract an ethical pool of contractors reveals ethical priorities	6	7
66	Scrutinizing financial transactions reveals ethical priorities	4	6
67	Protecting whistleblowers who expose ethical infractions reveals ethical priorities	4	6

The table for Q6 indicates that the priority that leaders place on ethical behaviour can be seen primarily through observable leadership behaviours. This finding is relevant because this thesis seeks to identify and analyze the impact of specific leadership skills and behaviours on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. While several leadership skills were identified by other interview questions, responses to Q6 suggested that observable behaviours should be considered influential forms of communication. The following paragraphs describe focused codes #56-67 in detail showing the ‘action’ or behavioural-orientation of each code.

Ten participants believed that treating subordinates, clients, and LNs fairly (nine references) and honestly (16 references) was the single biggest indicator of the priorities a leader placed on ethical behaviour. Fairness was noted as an important factor primarily in promotions and disciplinary actions. Honesty was noted as an important factor primarily in regards to safety and security information, and salary decreases. These findings were especially relevant in the subsequent coding phase (discussed further in the next chapter) which found that fairness and honesty were each linked to institutional pressures that detract from contractor’s long-term career intentions; and PSC personnel’s willingness to behave ethically.

Project, regional, and corporate-level leaders reported (increasingly with respect to authority level) that the act of codifying policies and agreements to ethical codes was

important to demonstrating the priority of ethical behaviour to subordinates (seven references). Codified behavioural norms and standards give contractors a framework within which they can operate (one reference). Requiring ‘buy-in’ from subordinates in the form of personal signatures demonstrates leaders’ seriousness on the issue (three references). Two participants noted disagreement with requiring signed buy-in in that they considered the signatures meaningless: leaders could not verify that their subordinates (especially LNs) understood what they had read and “[LNs] wouldn’t understand the ethos anymore than they did under the conditions they lived in.”<sup>403</sup> Furthermore, to be credible, policies needed to address specific hierarchical levels within PSCs and outline enforcement mechanisms at each level (six references). Focused code #57 appeared to be related to codes #62 and 70 (discussed below). Code #57 suggested that the real relevance behind written rules is not in the rules themselves: instead, relevance stems from the public and transparent manner in which rules are decided, written, communicated, and enforced. This information helped to inform analyses regarding the magnitude of leadership’s impact on ethical behaviour, discussed in the following chapter.

Committing resources to ensure ethical behaviour (#64) was a code that could have also encompassed codes #58, 60, 61, and 63. Participants associated high but seemingly worthwhile costs with deploying leaders to personally oversee compliance, with attending to welfare issues including job performance rating systems and quality-of-life measures, and with participating in the development of regulatory processes. Many of the industry’s significant regulatory developments were facilitated by interested PSCs contributing their time, employees, and resources. While many legal ‘grey’ areas remain (three references), PSCs can demonstrate the priority that they place on ethical behaviour by adhering to the ‘spirit of the law’ even when the letter of the law is permissive (three references); PSCs can also publically create their own ethical frameworks when laws are not applicable (two references). Finally, avoiding corruption, even when it is cheaper in the short-term to comply with corrupt business norms, was seen as a more-expensive but worthwhile behaviour. Understanding the variety of ways that ethical behaviour can incur resource costs helped to inform discussions about things that detract from ethical behaviour.

Likewise, fostering a climate of accountability (#59) was related to ‘self-policing’ (#65), scrutinizing financial records and transactions (#66), and protecting whistleblowers (#67). Each of these focused codes described actions that leaders must consistently perform (turning

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<sup>403</sup>(Interview #21)



them into behaviours) to positively impact on ethical behaviour. All 14 references to the importance of ‘fostering a climate of accountability’ suggested that leaders must personally inspect and supervise their subordinates’ behaviour in order to ensure that ethical norms and standards were being followed. Two respondents noted that clients should ideally be inspecting and supervising their PSCs. To be ‘self-policing,’ PSC leaders must fairly hold subordinates to account when norms or standards are violated (three references); companies that are self-policing encourage compliant contractors to remain and discourage deviant contractors from joining or remaining (six references). Three references suggested that the protection of whistleblowers enabled employees at all levels to call attention to ethical infractions, allowing supervision to be both top-down (from the leadership) and bottom-up (from employees).

Finally, encouraging regular discussion of ethical behaviour was seen as being demonstrative of the priority that a leader (or company) places on ethical behaviour. The primary mechanism for encouraging regular discussion was recurrent refresher training on company policies and standards (five references); this included re-reading and re-familiarizing contractors with policies and standards and then ensuring that documents are signed to affirm understanding. Emailed reminders of policies were noted as useful by one participant and one participant noted the importance of permanent committees and groups that should convene on a predictable basis to review and discuss policies and standards. This finding (focused code #62) related to findings about the relevance of written rules (focused code #57, discussed above). PSC personnel understand rules, codes, and policies to be important when leaders make an effort to keep such things in the foreground of operations.

Much of the information discovered by Q6 suggested that leaders’ behaviour had more impact on ethical norms than written rules. This information was relevant to analyses that sought to identify and understand influential, observable behaviour. This information was also an important prerequisite for determining the magnitude of the impact of leadership on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel.

#### Interview Guide Question 7

“Is there anything that you (or others) can do to create or prevent ethical dilemmas for subordinates?”

The qualitative responses that pertained to this open-ended question provided information about the positive pressures that contractors in hostile environments might face; pressures that assist PSC personnel with ethical decision-making. This information was helpful in identifying factors that positively influence the drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments. Question seven was addressed by 22 participants; 14 focused codes were generated and these codes were referenced 261 times: an average of 11.8 responses per participant.

<b>Interview Guide - Question 7 (n = 22)</b>			
<b>Focused Codes</b>		<b># of sources</b>	<b># of refs</b>
<b>Code</b>	<b>Q7 – Is there anything that you (or others) can do to create or prevent ethical dilemmas for subordinates?</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>261</b>
<b>68</b>	Using military service as a baseline can help to mitigate ethical dilemmas	20	68
<b>69</b>	Adopting a fair, collaborative approach to LN relationships helps to mitigate ethical dilemmas	12	32
<b>70</b>	Creating an ethical climate through actions and behaviours helps mitigate ethical dilemmas	11	20
<b>71</b>	Vetting contractors helps to mitigate ethical dilemmas	9	20
<b>72</b>	Facilitating the welfare and morale of contractors helps mitigate ethical dilemmas	9	16
<b>73</b>	Preventing fraternization and nepotism helps to mitigate ethical dilemmas	8	21
<b>74</b>	Hiring new contractors with fresh perspectives and ideas can help to mitigate ethical dilemmas	6	8
<b>75</b>	Ensuring mutual loyalty between companies and contractors helps to mitigate ethical dilemmas	6	8
<b>76</b>	Ensuring that contractors are socially aware helps to mitigate ethical dilemmas	5	23
<b>77</b>	Promoting and disciplining contractors according to fair appraisals helps to mitigate ethical dilemmas	5	19
<b>78</b>	Ensuring that contractors are well-trained helps to mitigate ethical dilemmas	5	7
<b>79</b>	Centralizing authority within multiple high-level people can help to mitigate ethical dilemmas	4	12
<b>80</b>	Fostering a sense of “belonging to something bigger” helps mitigate ethical dilemmas	4	4
<b>81</b>	Having one global company culture that fits the highest standards in all categories helps to mitigate ethical dilemmas	2	3

The table for Q7 suggests a wide variety of leadership behaviours that can create or prevent ethical dilemmas (depending on whether the behaviours are present or absent, respectively). “Fairness,” “social awareness,” and caring for the “welfare” of contractors were recurring themes. To demonstrate the relevancy of each of these focused codes, the following paragraphs describe each focused code in greater detail.

Nearly every participant believed that using military service as a baseline for ethics, training, and leadership had an impact on the creation or prevention of ethical dilemmas for subordinates.<sup>404</sup> 19 participants cited instances of military service helping to prevent ethical dilemmas (55 references); Nine participants noted that a military background had an impact

<sup>404</sup> (20 of 24 participants = 83.3%)

of some sort (11 references); and two participants noted instances of military service creating ethical dilemmas (two references). Discipline and technical knowledge was seen as the primary benefit of using military service as a baseline (18 references); leadership skills and experience was also seen as a benefit (14 references); and an ability to understand and adhere to ethical codes was noted as a benefit (four references). This finding (focused code #68) was especially relevant during analyses of PSC personnel's understandings of security in a commercial context. For better or for worse, military training appeared to provide a baseline for PSCs. The vast majority of initial codes comprising focused code #68 suggested that military experience helped to prevent ethical dilemmas<sup>405</sup> while focused codes #31, 32, and 38 suggested that military experience can create ethical challenges. These findings are discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

Findings regarding "fairness" (focused codes #69, 73, and 77) were relevant to understanding PSC personnel's personal motivations to fulfil responsibilities. Twelve participants believed that adopting a fair, collaborative approach to LN relationships helped to mitigate ethical dilemmas. This code suggested that a number of ethical dilemmas stemmed from expat-LN relationships. Many participants stated that investing in LNs prevents problems (19 references) and encourages LNs to contribute information essential to ethical decision-making (five references). Contractors who did not care about fair, collaborative relationships with LNs were noted to cause ethical dilemmas (eight references).

Comments about fairness extended beyond LNs and included fair treatment amongst contractors. Preventing fraternization and nepotism was discussed as being an important element of fairness; as was promoting and disciplining contractors according to fair appraisal systems. Participants stated that leaders had a responsibility to break up "cliques" (five references); cliques were seen to damage morale while teamwork was viewed as essential to performance (two references). Also, leaders could not fairly discipline (eight references) or promote (seven references) subordinates or protect clients (two references) if they were overly-emotionally close.

Data underpinning focused code #70 seemed to help corroborate the findings of codes #57 and 62: leaders' actions and behaviours were reported to do more to create or prevent ethical dilemmas than documents and written rules. Participants noted that there are fewer rules in hostile environments and commercial industries to support leaders, especially compared to the military (four references) and thus, the ethical codes ingrained into PSC

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<sup>405</sup> (55 of 68 references = 81%)

personnel have a strong impact (nine references). When ethical codes are lacking or unclear, PSC personnel tend to use their own judgment to (attempt to) creatively prevent ethical dilemmas (six references). This finding was particularly interesting in light of focused code #32 (which addressed aggressive, militant behaviour) and #31, 38, and 68 (which addressed the impact of military experience). Together, these findings are relevant because they suggest that, in the absence of clear guidance from superiors, PSC leaders' creative attempts to solve ethical dilemmas will (for better or for worse) be heavily influenced by military experiences. A detailed analysis of these findings is discussed in the next chapter.

Ensuring that contractors are socially aware, either before hiring or through training, is another leadership action that can help to prevent ethical dilemmas. Socially aware contractors can incorporate ethical codes into decision-making processes more easily, particularly when dealing with LN populations (nine references). Some participants suggested that police-trained contractors were more likely to be socially aware (five references). Leaders that emphasized training of any sort were more likely (in general) to prevent unethical behaviour because training promoted calm and confidence; which, in turn, led to better, more ethical decision-making (four references).

Finally, leaders could help to prevent ethical dilemmas for subordinates by consolidating financial (six references) and recruitment (four references) authority at higher levels. Corporate and regional-level leaders were reported to be exposed to different pressures than lower-level leaders and supervision over a few higher-level leaders was easier to achieve.

Q7 asked for information about actions and behaviours that help PSC leaders prevent (or create) ethical dilemmas for subordinates. The responses related to Q7 contributed to a more-detailed understanding of how and why specific behaviours can help leaders establish and maintain a company-wide ethical culture. The detailed responses to Q7 are relevant because they make it possible to discuss (in the following chapter) which specific leadership skills and behaviours affect the drivers of ethical behaviour.

#### Interview Guide Question 8

“Whose actions (yours or others) have the most impact when it comes to ensuring the ethical behaviour of contractors in hostile environments?”

The qualitative responses that pertained to this open-ended question provided information about which leaders were best-positioned to have the greatest impact on the

ethical behaviour of contractors. Question eight prompted participants to call attention to specific levels of decision-making authority. 19 participants, however, believed that there were some actions that all leaders could employ (regardless of position) to help ensure the ethical behaviour of contractors. In total, question eight was addressed by 22 participants; 10 focused codes were generated and these codes were referenced 245 times (see charts below): an average of 11.1 responses per participant.

Because of the range of responses generated by this question, the focused codes relating to Q8 are presented in two sections: those pertaining to ‘specific leadership levels’ and those pertaining to ‘all leadership levels.’ The paragraphs comprising each section describe the elements (derived from initial codes) of the focused codes given in each of the two tables. The focused codes for Q8 informed discussions about the self-identities of leaders occupying influential positions; understanding these focused codes also made it possible to identify and analyze control mechanisms within PSCs.

#### Influential Actions Available to ‘Specific Leaders’

In total, 83% of respondents emphasized actions that specific leaders could take to help ensure the ethical behaviour of contractors.<sup>406</sup> While most participants avoided selecting one specific leader as having the “most” impact, most participants were willing to articulate actions that could occur at specific levels. The following table shows the distribution of participant responses:

<b>Interview Guide - Question 8 (n = 22)</b>			
<b>Focused Codes</b>			<b># of sources</b>
<b>Code</b>	<b>Q8 – Whose actions (yours or others) have the most impact when it comes to ensuring the ethical behaviour of contractors in hostile environments?</b>	<b>20</b>	<b># of refs</b>
<b>...actions available to specific leadership levels</b>			
<b>82</b>	Clients have observable impact by setting, supervising, and auditing high ethical standards	16	111
<b>83</b>	Corporate leaders impact positively by ensuring policies lead to good personnel selection and behaviour	14	24
<b>84</b>	Project and Team leaders impact positively by supervising the activities of LNs and sub-contracted partners	10	14
<b>85</b>	Media personnel impact positively by compelling PSCs to publically demonstrate commitments to ethical behaviour	8	17
<b>86</b>	Team leaders are best positioned to identify and influence most unethical behaviour as it occurs	8	12
<b>87</b>	Project leaders are best positioned to translate corporate doctrine into enforceable ethical behavioural standards	4	6
<b>88</b>	Training providers and licensing bodies impact positively by teaching contractors soft skills	1	5

<sup>406</sup> (20 of 24 participants = 83.3%)

The table (above) for Q8 shows that most participants believed client actions, not PSC leaders, had the most significant impact on ensuring the ethical behaviour of contractors in hostile environments. An overwhelming majority of the comments stemming from Q8 pertained to the standards and ethical priorities of clients. Commercial clients were noted as often being willing and able to hold PSCs to high degrees of accountability (15 references) while government clients were noted as often being very tolerant of (or even encouraging) unethical behaviour; including human rights violations and conflicts of interests (27 references). Focused code #82 was relevant to analyses that examined how different types of clients might affect PSCs in different ways (discussed in the next chapter).

A second finding that referenced leaders outside of the normal PSC hierarchy was that eight participants believed media personnel had a significant impact on the ethical behaviour of contractors. Media reports that influence public perceptions were cited as being very influential (five references) due to contractors' reputational concerns (found in Q5). Additionally, media was seen as being very unbalanced and unfair: supportive reports of PSC activities was perceived to be rare and so, believing there would be no counterbalance, PSC leaders felt obliged not to give media personnel more negative information (seven references).

Thirdly, training providers and licensing authorities (specifically, the SIA) outside of the normal PSC hierarchy were cited as having significant influence. Training providers can choose to emphasize hard or soft skills in the performance of private security duties (one reference) and training providers assess aspiring contractors according to standards set out by licensing authorities (one reference).

Within the normal PSC hierarchy, corporate leaders were noted as having the most impact on contractor behaviour; this suggested that the enforcement of ethical rules and norms is a top-down phenomenon. Establishing policies (13 references) and encouraging the selection and retention of ethical personnel (seven references) were cited as the most important powers of corporate-level leaders.

In very general terms, team-level leaders were cited as being the first leaders able to spot and take action against ethical infractions on a day-to-day basis (12 references). Project-level leaders were cited as being responsible for translating corporate policies into operational norms (6 references). Participants seemed to rank each of these leaders as having more or less impact according to their own roles and experiences within PSCs. Nearly all participants

commenting on these levels of leadership, however, agreed that both project and team leaders had to fulfil their responsibilities for ethical compliance to be achieved.

Much of the information relevant to Q8 (regarding specific levels of leadership) showed that ethical standards are determined and enforced by top-down processes. Q8 also showed that the “top” of the “top-down process” is not necessarily in PSCs but could originate at the client, media (societal), or training provider levels. Understanding the ‘top-down’ nature of ethics within PSCs was relevant because it enabled to a more-informed understanding of the second driver of ethical behaviour (‘PSC personnel’s understandings of their personal roles in establishing an ethical climate’), discussed in detail in the next chapter.

#### Influential Actions Available to ‘All Leaders’

In total, 79% of respondents stated that all leaders had some ability to impact on the ethical behaviour of contractors in hostile environments.<sup>407</sup> The following table shows the distribution of participant responses:

<b>Interview Guide - Question 8 (n = 22)</b>			
<b>Focused Codes</b>		<b># of sources</b>	<b># of refs</b>
<b>Code</b>	<b>Q8 – Whose actions (yours or others) have the most impact when it comes to ensuring the ethical behaviour of contractors in hostile environments?</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>...actions available to all leadership levels</b>			
<b>89</b>	All leaders impact positively by creating networks of mutual support	11	20
<b>90</b>	All leaders impact positively by fostering free and open communication	11	19
<b>91</b>	All leaders impact positively by establishing a culture of ethical behaviour	11	19

This table for Q8 shows that all leaders can, to some extent, help to create environments that are conducive (or detrimental) to ethical behaviour. Some participants used the category “all leaders” as a default answer that meant “all leaders have some ability to impact on contractor behaviour.” Probing questions were often necessary to encourage participants to state exactly ‘which leaders had which abilities’ or ‘which abilities were inherent to all leaders’ by virtue of their status as leaders. Nearly all of the responses related to Q8 appeared to be limited to formal leaders; including Code #89, which referred to formal networks of mutual support (15 references) much more often than informal networks (three references).

The information discovered by Q8 (regarding all levels of leadership) was relevant because it helped identify leaders’ perceptions of their own roles within PSCs.

<sup>407</sup> (19 of 24 participants = 79.1%)

Understanding these perceptions led to a more-informed understanding of the second driver of ethical behaviour: ‘PSC personnel’s understandings of their personal roles in establishing an ethical climate’, which is discussed in detail in the following chapter.

#### Interview Guide Question 9

“What people, codes, rules, or training do you find most helpful when you are faced with solving an ethical problem?”

The qualitative responses that pertained to this open-ended question provided information about the specific leadership skills and behaviours that affect the drivers of ethical behaviour. Question nine was addressed by all 24 participants; 6 focused codes were generated and these codes were referenced 251 times; an average of 10.5 responses per participant.

Interview Guide - Question 9 (n = 24)			
Focused Codes			# of sources
Code	Q9 – What people, codes, rules, or training do you find most helpful when you are faced with solving an ethical problem?		# of refs
		24	251
92	Age and experience impact on leadership abilities, which in turn affect ethical decision-making	22	81
93	Empathy helps leaders select effective disciplinary techniques, which in turn helps leaders solve ethical problems	17	71
94	Open and honest communication throughout the organization helps leaders solve ethical problems	17	37
95	Seeking correct information is essential to ethical decision-making	11	37
96	Leaders must be and feel empowered to affect change in order to solve ethical problems	8	12
97	Ethical codes provide helpful frameworks for leaders to reference when faced with solving ethical problems	7	13

The table for Q9 shows that most participants believed that personal qualities were more helpful than formalized, written codes when faced with solving ethical problems. These findings corroborated the findings of Q6 which also indicated that written rules were of lesser importance than other influence factors. Only seven participants cited ethical codes as ‘helpful frameworks’ and none of the participants stated that the codes alone were enough to solve ethical problems. The following paragraphs describe the focused codes in greater detail. Understanding the details of each focused code for Q9 improved this thesis’s understanding of how and why specific leadership skills and behaviours can affect the drivers of ethical behaviour.



Age and experience were seen as the most helpful personal qualities for helping leaders to solve ethical problems. Some participants correlated age with leadership experience but not to a 1:1 ratio (five references). Military experience was specifically cited as having an impact on leaders' abilities to solve ethical problems insofar as many ethical problems were reportedly related to team dynamics (11 references) and an (in)ability to cooperate with LNs (10 references). Positive experiences in the military helped leaders to solve ethical problems; conversely, negative experiences (including norms that permitted aggressive treatment of LNs) hindered leaders' abilities to solve ethical problems. PSC experiences appeared to be more helpful than military experience with regards to LN interactions (32 references); this was in large part because PSCs lack the logistical and fire support of militaries. As well as being dependent on LNs for labour, contractors had to rely on the good will LNs to survive in hostile locations where military support was unavailable. Focused code #92 was relevant in that it appeared to further explain how and why military experience can impact on ethical behaviour of PSC personnel (focused codes #31, 32, 38, and 68).

Empathy was cited as being very important to helping leaders solve ethical problems insofar as empathy enabled leaders to select correct disciplinary techniques. Contracts and SOPs were cited as baseline tools which could be leveraged when solving ethical problems (19 references) and "sacking" was cited as an extremely powerful disciplinary measure (39 references). However, the employment of these techniques was often seen as a complex decision due to the importance of maintaining functional teams and leadership credibility. Empathy was seen to help leaders to choose disciplinary measures that were proportionate to ethical infractions. This information helped to inform analyses regarding leadership skills that can help leaders to establish and maintain an ethical climate.

Open and honest communication also helped leaders to solve ethical problems; primarily because open communication was seen to enable leaders to consult with other experienced leaders during problem-solving (19 references). Openly communicating with subordinates was also seen as necessary to preventing most problems from occurring in the first place; and as a mechanism for gathering the information necessary to make ethical decisions (12 references). Four leaders believed that honest communication was a prerequisite for being a credible leader (seven references). "Credible" leaders could more-easily gain agreement or 'buy-in' from subordinates, thus limiting disputes and enabling the rapid implementation of solutions.

Finally, having correct information, which often required leaders to seek out facts and conduct deliberate research, was referenced 37 times as being helpful during problem solving.

“Having correct information” included having a correct understanding of how the ‘letter of the law’ compared to the ‘spirit of the law’ (5 references) and correctly understanding that ethical behaviour must be internally (not externally) enforced (12 references).

Much of the information discovered by Q9 was relevant because it fed analyses of the impact of leadership behaviour and how some PSC leaders perceive their roles within PSCs. Identifying and understanding PSC leaders’ perceptions helped to explain the second driver of ethical behaviour (PSC leaders’ understandings of their personal roles in establishing company-wide ethical climates); which is discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

### Interview Guide Question 10

“Are there any people or pressures that detract from your ability to make ethical decisions (or to act ethically)?”

The qualitative responses that pertained to this open-ended question provided information about the negative pressures that contractors in hostile environments might face; pressures that impede ethical decision-making. This information was helpful in identifying some of the drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments. Question ten was addressed by all 24 participants; 7 focused codes were generated and these codes were referenced 263 times; an average of 11.0 responses per participant.

Interview Guide - Question 10 (n = 24)			
Focused Codes			# of sources
Code	Q10 – Are there any people or pressures that detract from your ability to make ethical decisions (or to act ethically)?	24	# of refs
98	Militant behaviour and leadership detracts from contractors' morale and abilities to behave ethically	20	99
99	High salaries and job availability lowers leaders' abilities to pressure contractors into behaving ethically	17	53
100	Pressures from LN governments and cultures can detract from contractors' abilities to behave ethically	13	35
101	Policies and leadership failures that cause low morale detract from contractors' willingness to behave ethically	12	36
102	Clients can pressure contractors into making unethical decisions	10	14
103	Financial objectives can pressure PSCs and clients to make less (or un-)ethical decisions	7	14
104	Disjoints between organizational levels detract from contractors' abilities to behave ethically	3	12

The table for Q10 shows that several of the negative pressures that impede ethical decision-making are the antitheses of the positive pressures that improve ethical decision-

making: for example, militant behaviour appeared to stem from a lack of social awareness; disjoints between organizational levels detracted from teamwork and communication; and clients' standards could impede ethical decision-making as well as improve it. Morale appeared twice as a factor of ethical behaviour and decision-making. The following paragraphs describe each focused code in greater detail.

Nearly every participant stated that militant behaviour and aggressive, military-style leadership detracted from contractor morale and made it more difficult for contractors to make ethical decisions. Militant and autocratic leadership styles were referenced 31 times as causing feelings of disloyalty, resentment, and low motivation amongst contractors; these feelings led contractors to provide lower levels of service to clients and to move more frequently between PSCs. Militant and aggressive behaviours, characterized by racist remarks, penchants for violence, angry outbursts, and being unsympathetically dismissive, were referenced 29 times as provoking similarly negative feelings. Nine participants believed that many of these negative militant behaviours stemmed from "teeth arms culture". Although military service had been previously noted in Q7 (code #68) as a contributor to ethical behaviour, in terms of standards and understanding the importance of ethical codes, military service also had a potential downside: teeth arms culture was branded as aggressive, violent, and often anti-social (17 references). Ex-military and government employees were reported to often lack commercial skills, with special emphasis on a lack of 'best practice' human resource management skills (22 references). The findings of focused code #98 in Q10 coincide with the findings of focused codes #32 (aggressive contractors) and #35 (unskilled contractors).

More generically, Q10 found that all policies and leadership failures that caused low moral detracted from contractors' willingness to behave ethically in hostile environments. Feeling disempowered lowered contractors' willingness to perform to high standards (seven references). Nepotism was reported to disempower formal leaders and lower teams' abilities to perform to high standards (15 references). Feeling expendable also lowered contractors' loyalties and willingness to be team players (14 references). These findings were especially relevant to analyses of contractor motivations, discussed in detail in the subsequent chapter.

Nearly every participant also agreed that very high salaries and high job availability detracted from their abilities to pressure subordinates into adhering to ethical norms and rules. High salaries were seen to decrease contractors' long-term career intentions, which, in turn, decreased contractors' performance and desire to develop themselves professionally (eight references). High job availability decreased contractor quality as hiring requirements lowered

(16 references); and it decreased contractors' loyalty to particular PSCs (14 references) because contractors could move to other companies if they didn't want to adhere to the ethical standards of their current PSC (14 references).

Finally, pressures from LN governments and cultures could impede contractors' ethical decision-making in that it was often in PSCs' short-term interest to participate in corruption and bribery. LN governments were cited as often treating Western PSCs unfairly through uneven standards, which had the follow-on effect of damaging contractor morale (13 references). When combined with the financial objectives of PSCs (noted in focused codes #27 and 30), some contractors felt pressured to compromise their company's or their own ethical codes (53 references). The pressure became more compelling as culture immersion could, over time, allow some contractors to view business from a "corrupt" LN perspective (22 references).

Much of the information discovered by Q10 was relevant because it enabled analyses of the detractors from PSC personnel's personal motivations to behave ethically. Identifying and understanding detractors was important because these detractors made up the obstacles that leadership must overcome if leadership is to have a positive influence on ethical behaviour. Q10 helped to inform the second driver of ethical behaviour ('PSC personnel's understandings of their personal roles in establishing ethical cultures'), discussed in detail in the next chapter.

#### Interview Guide Question 11

"Think of a time when you stopped (or could have stopped) something unethical from occurring. You do not have to describe the situation if you do not want to. What training or knowledge did you possess that helped you to influence other people involved in the situation?"

The qualitative responses that pertained to this critical incident question provided information about the specific leadership skills that affect the drivers of ethical behaviour. Question nine was addressed by 18 participants; 4 focused codes were generated and these

codes were referenced 60 times; an average of 3.3 responses per participant, which was the lowest response rate of the 12 core questions.<sup>408</sup>

Interview Guide - Question 11 (n = 18)			
Focused Codes			
Code	Q11 – What training or knowledge did you possess that helped you to influence other people involved in the situation?	# of sources	# of refs
105	Influence stems from military and PSC training that gives leaders skills and 'expert' power	11	26
106	Influence is enabled by an ingrained military ethos that projects responsibility onto leaders	10	15
107	Influence stems from the use of soft, social, life skills	6	12
108	Influence stems from military leadership experiences that enable leaders to write and implement policies	6	7

The table for Q11 shows that 11 participants relied on military training and experience to help them influence other PSC contractors. Nearly half of the references pertained to intrinsic motivations (an “ethos of responsibility”) and “soft” skills.<sup>409</sup> Military leadership experience was also important in terms of policy writing; which can be considered an indirect or ‘environmental’ mechanism for influencing subordinates.

The data gathered by Q11 appeared to be compatible with that of Q9, which found that PSC leaders relied more on ingrained, personal qualities than external, written rules when solving ethical problems. The findings of Q11 did not conflict with the findings of previous questions because they provided information only about degrees of influence; they did not provide information about whether the influence detracted from or encouraged ethical decision-making. For example, one participant noted that experience could be bad or good in that, a person who has been doing things incorrectly for 20 years may be viewed (or view himself) as a subject matter expert and thus influence others to also do things incorrectly. Likewise, the most damaging toxic leaders are skilled at leveraging soft, social skills to the detriment of their organizations.

The information discovered by Q11 was relevant because it contributed to a more-detailed explanation of the drivers of ethical behaviour within PSCs. The information also assisted in analyses identifying specific leadership skills that could help leaders to establish and maintain ethical climates.

<sup>408</sup> The second lowest response rate of the 12 core interview questions came from question #12, which was the second and only other critical incident question. The low response rates for these two questions may be because critical incident questions require participants to recall and reflect on specific personal experiences. Critical incident questions are thus more demanding than open-ended questions, which may have discouraged detailed responses.

<sup>409</sup>  $(15 + 12) \text{ references out of } 60 = 45\%$

## Interview Guide Questions 12

“Think of a time when you stopped (or could have stopped) something unethical from occurring. You do not have to describe the situation if you do not want to. What actions did you take (or could you have taken) to prevent the situation or to influence other people involved?”

The qualitative responses that pertained to this critical incident question provided information about the specific leadership behaviours that affect the drivers of ethical behaviour. Question twelve was addressed by 19 participants; 6 focused codes were generated and these codes were referenced 80 times; an average of 4.2 responses per participant.

Interview Guide - Question 12 (n = 19)			
Focused Codes			
Code	Q12 – What actions did you take (or could you have taken) to prevent the situation or to influence other people involved?	# of sources	# of refs
109	Influence stems from leaders treating LNs and contractors fairly, with mutual respect and trust	15	37
110	Influence stems from establishing a climate of accountability and supervision	8	19
111	Influence stems from gaining 'buy in' from subordinates, thus ensuring that directives are followed	5	10
112	Influence stems from feeling empowered and supported by higher, enabling leaders to make disciplinary decisions	4	6
113	Influence stems from ensuring that clients share legal & financial risks, thus curbing some client pressure	3	4
114	Influence stems from communicating with clients to manage conflict and expectations	3	4

The table for Q12 suggests that unethical situations could be prevented or minimized by leader actions that establish climates of fairness, respect, and accountability. The information gathered by Q12 appeared to corroborate and expand upon the findings of Q7, which showed that ethical dilemmas could be prevented by leaders who exhibited fairness, social awareness, and care for the welfare of contractors. The following paragraphs demonstrate the relevancy of each of Q12’s focused codes by describing them in greater detail.

A majority of participants (63%) agreed that treating LNs and contractors fairly was important to preventing unethical situations from occurring; and to influencing people in the midst of situations. Fairness was described as showing “fair” concern for the needs of both expat and LN contractors, as well as LNs who might be able to affect the climate within a PSC’s area of operations (16 references). Mutual respect was characterized as earnestly considering subordinates’ perspectives on issues and trusting in subordinates’ competencies

once they had proven themselves competent (14 references). Honesty and open communications was strongly associated with treating LNs and contractors fairly (seven references). In many ways, code #109 was similar to focused codes #69 and 111. The process of “gaining buy-in” appeared to be one specific way that leaders could demonstrate a collaborative leadership approach and respect for other contractors. The similarities between these focused codes were found to be relevant during analyses: the codes supported each other, increasing the reliability of this thesis’s results.

Establishing a climate of accountability and supervision was also mentioned as important to preventing unethical situations from occurring. Responses indicated that a “climate” of accountability was characterized by an expectation amongst contractors and subordinates that inspections would take place at frequent intervals; and that infractions would be readily identifiable and traceable (seven references). “Round counts” (to determine ammunition expenditures) were the most frequently-reported example of a type of inspection used by leaders to maintain accountability (four references). The inverse of accountability was also discussed: unethical behaviours were more likely to occur when contractors and subordinates had no expectations of being held accountable for their actions (two references). CPA Order 17 issued in December 2006, which gave contractors immunity from state prosecution in Iraq, was cited as causing major problems because it caused many contractors to believe that they could not be held accountable for their behaviour.

Q12 asked for information about actions and behaviours that PSC leaders (could) use to prevent ethical dilemmas and/or influence subordinates. The responses related to Q12 were relevant because they contributed to a more-detailed understanding of how and why specific behaviours can help leaders establish and maintain a company-wide ethical culture. The detailed responses to Q12 also made it possible to discuss (in the following chapter) which specific leadership skills and behaviours affect the drivers of ethical behaviour.

#### Additional Information Determined from Interviews

The initial codes generated during constant comparison analyses were generated independently of the interview questions; raw data was coded according to its meaning and relevancy regardless of which interview question prompted participants to give the data. For reasons of logic and presentation, as initial codes combined to form higher-level focused codes, it was useful to organize information according to the interview questions. Thus,

focused codes #1-114 are discussed above according to the interview questions that they are most relevant to.

Some initial codes combined to form focused codes that did not directly address any of the 12 core interview guide questions. These codes were still legitimate findings, however, and they were relevant to analyses regarding the impact of leadership on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. Focused codes #115-131 are discussed below.

### Codes Pertaining to Contractor Motivations and Influences

Many qualitative responses provided information about specific motivators and influences that affect the behaviour of PSC personnel. Many of these motivators appeared to be levers that leaders could manipulate to affect the ethical behaviour of subordinates. Many of these influencers appeared to help explain the causes underlying the ethical behaviour of some PSC personnel. The responses of 23 participants pertained to contractor motivations and influences; 14 focused codes were generated from these responses and these codes were referenced 191 times; an average of 8.3 responses per participant.

<b>Codes Pertaining to Contractor Motivations &amp; Influences (n = 23)</b>			
<b>Focused Codes</b>		<b># of sources</b>	<b># of refs</b>
<b>Code</b>	<b>QX – Contractor Motivations &amp; Influences</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>191</b>
<b>115</b>	Contractors are highly motivated by financial reward	14	30
<b>116</b>	Contractors have important employment considerations beyond financial reward	11	26
<b>117</b>	Long-term career intentions noticeably improve contractor quality	10	21
<b>118</b>	Time spent in the military or even PSCs is not always an indicator of quality	9	21
<b>119</b>	Contractors view themselves as generally older, more mature, and more disciplined than soldiers and civilians in hostile environments	8	17
<b>120</b>	Contractors feel that they are seen as expendable assets, despite that excellent contractors are very rare	7	16
<b>121</b>	Leadership quality affects contractor performance and behaviour	6	9
<b>122</b>	Some contractors 'reinvent' themselves upon leaving the military and joining a PSC (described as a "Walter Mitty")	6	6
<b>123</b>	Stable contracts and progressive careers are desired but difficult to achieve	5	7
<b>124</b>	Ex-military NCOs generally have more leadership experience than officers	5	7
<b>125</b>	Ex-military officers are generally better trained to see the 'big picture'	5	6
<b>126</b>	Many contractors believe that PSCs often provide higher quality security services at lower cost than military forces	4	10
<b>127</b>	Contractors, especially those fresh from military, can be slightly rebellious	4	6
<b>128</b>	Contractors in teams often have an underlying distrust of management's truthfulness	3	9

The table for QX shows that contractors are motivated and influenced by a wide range of factors including remuneration, personal career goals, military experience and training, and the behaviour of their leaders. The following paragraphs describe the first four of QX's



focused codes in detail; these codes are relevant because they corroborate and expand upon the findings of the Interview Guide's planned questions. The final 10 focused codes for QX are summarized for the sake of brevity and because their titles are largely self explanatory. These codes are equally relevant, however, to analyses regarding contractor motivations and influences discussed in Chapter Five.

Financial reward was found to be an important motivator to contractors. Three participants explained that an unspecified majority of contractors were initially attracted to the private security industry because of financial rewards and that other considerations became increasingly important only as time progressed (other considerations are discussed in the following paragraph). Short-term profit was stated as being an important, initial motivator for contractors in eight references. Although different jobs and contracts offered different amounts of money, the cash-in-hand-per-day that one could earn as a Western contractor was easily more than what one was earning as a national soldier.<sup>410</sup> After contractors began to see private security as a career, they became more motivated to perform well in order to remain employed and paid (11 references). 'Performing well' encompassed taking risks: one participant explained, "We are paid good money to take risks and sometimes we've got to do that."<sup>411</sup> The "good money" that the participant referred to was the \$12,000 and \$33,000 per month that most contractors were able to earn.<sup>412</sup> Risk-taking was seen as inherently undesirable and only necessary because contractors had agreed to provide security services in exchange for fair remuneration. The sentiment expressed in this quote is distinctly different from the "adventure-seeking" characteristics often associated with "mercenaries." According to this participant risk-taking was related to duty and the fulfilment of agreements, rather than enjoyment. Two participants indicated that a reduction in pay would be grounds for quitting and working in the UK in better living conditions. Similar to the perspective on risk-taking, these participants indicated that living conditions were often inherent undesirable and only necessary because contractors had agreed to provide security services in exchange for fair remuneration. Because this sample was not representative of the contractor population, it is not possible to know how important pay is to the average contractor; the findings of these interviews do, however, suggest that financial reward is, to some extent, important. The importance that PSC personnel placed on financial reward helped to inform analyses of the mechanisms available to leaders for influencing subordinate's behaviour.

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<sup>410</sup> (Dunigan, 2011, p. 63)

<sup>411</sup> (Interview #13)

<sup>412</sup> (US Government: Government Accountability Office, 2005, p. 36)

Employment considerations beyond financial reward were also considered important. Being part of a PSC with a good business and professional atmosphere (eight references) was noted as sometimes being more important than getting a few dollars more elsewhere (three references). Feeling a sense of purpose (including being able to achieve more for reconstruction efforts than what one could achieve in the military) was also noted as an important driver for contractors to remain loyal to a particular PSC or contract (six references). Avoiding unnecessary danger and feeling a sense of pride in one's work was to some extent important (two references each); and earning a good reputation for one's self, taking on professional challenges, and achieving a work-life good balance were also listed as important considerations (one response each). Similarly to financial reward, the importance that PSC personnel placed on these motivators helped develop an understanding of the mechanisms available to leaders for influencing subordinate's behaviour.

Career-intentions appeared to have a significant influence on contractors' behaviour. Nearly every reference comprising focused code #117 indicated that contractors who desired quick cash cared less about their personal performance, how their PSCs performed, or the impact they might have on local communities (three references); contractors who planned to work with PSCs for a significant length of time were found to be more caring (16 references). Newer contractors often tried to uphold gung-ho, militaristic images (one reference); however efforts to uphold these images were said to usually fade as contractors developed long-term perspectives, adjusting to their civilian roles. The findings that comprised focused code #117 suggest that leaders can influence the ethical behaviour of subordinates by screening for and encouraging long-term career intentions.

Nine participants indicated that contractors do not necessarily increase in quality by spending more time in the military or a PSC. One contractor noted "it's not automatic that just because an individual has three or four years of Iraq PSD experience, he is better than someone who has six months of Iraq PSD experience."<sup>413</sup> The environments where PSCs primarily operate (Iraq and Afghanistan) were described as changing environments where contractors must be open to new ideas (two references); age and military rank could sometimes impede contractors' abilities to adapt to change (two references). Military skills were also noted as not being applicable in PSCs on a one-to-one basis. Thus, performing well in the military did not guarantee good performance in a PSC (12 references). Finally, one participant suggested that PSCs often lacked credible appraisal systems, making it difficult to

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<sup>413</sup> (Interview #11)

judge the quality of a contractor based on his time in a particular role (one reference). This information suggested that time is not a reliable indicator of PSC personnel's development or quality. This finding does not contradict focused code #105, which explained training; or focused codes #92 or 108, which explained event-based experiences. This information does, however, provide further support for analyses regarding the importance of fairness in appraisal systems. These details also help to explain the first driver of ethical behaviour ('PSC personnel's understandings of security in a commercial context'), which is discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

The remaining focused codes in table QX were relevant insofar as they provided information useful for analyzing factors that detract from PSC personnel's motivations to behave ethically (#120, 122, 123, 127, and 128); they also offered some explanation of contractors' self-perceptions, which helped in analyses that explain some PSC personnel's understandings of security in a commercial context (#119 and 126); finally, they offered further details for two previously discussed themes regarding the value of military training and experience and the impact of leader behaviours (#121, 124, and 125). The information discovered in QX was relevant to analyses that of the drivers of ethical behaviour in PSCs, discussed in detail in the next chapter.

#### Codes Pertaining to LN Contractors and Partners

Several qualitative responses described the unique contributions of Local National (LN) contractors and partners. These responses were considered important because many of the drivers of and challenges related to ethical behaviour pertained to the increasing cooperation that British PSCs must have with LN legal structures, businesses, and communities.<sup>414</sup> The responses of 7 participants pertained to LN contractors and partners; 3 focused codes were generated from these responses and these codes were referenced 20 times; an average of 2.9 responses per participant.

Codes Pertaining to Local National Contractors & Partners (n = 7)			
Focused Codes			
Code	QY – LN Contractors & Partners	# of sources	# of refs
129	LN contractors and partners contribute by knowing local terrain, people, and infrastructure; thus incentivizing cooperation	5	11
130	LN contractors facilitate essential business opportunities, thus incentivizing cooperation	5	6
131	LN contractors contribute by being cheaper, thus incentivizing cooperation	3	3

<sup>414</sup> Focused codes #24, 33, 34, 43, 56, 69, 84, and 100

The table for QY suggests that local national contractors and partners make unique contributions to PSCs operating in hostile environments; these contributions provide incentives for expat contractors to overcome the challenges identified in aforementioned codes. Partnerships with LNs were described in the form of employment, community support, and business ownership. The largest contribution of LNs appeared to be information provision (six references). Information could be security related or it could relate to local (formal and informal) authorities who could facilitate agreements and allow safe travel through their living spaces (five references). The cheaper labour costs associated with LNs appeared to be an important, but secondary, consideration (three references).

The information discovered by QY was relevant to analyses of how and why specific leadership skills and behaviours can help leaders to establish and maintain an ethical climate. An explanation of these skills and behaviours is discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

#### Focused Coding Results: Themes

The focused coding phase first led to the generation of 131 focused codes. As evidenced in the discussions of the focused codes above, each focused code preserved the salient elements of the initial codes comprising it. The focused coding phase culminated with the distillation of the 131 focused codes into 17 themes. These themes made it possible to identify relationships between codes and to substantiate theoretical statements generated by coding phase III: theoretical coding.<sup>415</sup> To begin the process of theoretical integration, themes were sequenced (or “sorted”) according to their relevance to the three sub-questions poised at the start of this thesis.<sup>416</sup> Sequencing the themes helped to reveal explanations of how and why leadership might impact on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. The chart below shows the themes, as they were sequenced, and the focused codes that comprise each theme.

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<sup>415</sup> (Glaser, 1978, p. 74)

<sup>416</sup> Sequencing can also be referred to as “theoretical sorting” (Ng & Hase, 2008, p. 161)

#	List of Themes	Comprised of Codes
1	The organizational objectives of PSCs are limited to commercial service provision	22, 26 – 30
2	Civilians, soldiers, and contractors can misunderstand the missions of PSCs	12, 31, 38 <sup>417</sup>
3	Military training and experience provides a baseline for PSCs	68, 106, 124, 125
4	Contractors view themselves as effective and efficient security providers	119, 126
5	PSCs cannot function by following military models	47, 49, 105, 118
6	Ethical standards are determined and enforced by top-down processes	4, 8, 14, 82, 84 – 88, 91
7	Militaries and PSCs have very different systems of accountability	37, 115, 116
8	Reputational concerns and profitability as a motivator to protect reputation	51 – 55
9	Factors that help leaders to understand and fulfil their personal roles	1, 3, 5, 11, 23, 96, 97, 112
10	Factors that inhibit leaders from understanding and fulfilling their personal roles	35, 41, 99, 104
11	Negative (detracting) influences on personal motivations to behave ethically	7, 32, 36, 39, 40, 98, 100, 101 – 103, 120, 122, 123, 127, 128
12	Positive (mitigating) influences on personal motivations to behave ethically	17, 73, 77, 92, 117
13	Skills that help leaders to establish and maintain an ethical climate	24, 33, 34, 83, 93, 107, 108, 114, 129 – 130
14	Behaviours that help leaders to establish and maintain an ethical climate	2, 6, 10, 13, 15, 18 – 21, 25, 69, 71, 72, 74 – 76, 78 – 80, 89, 90, 94, 95, 109 – 111, 113, 131
15	Leadership behaviours that have changed ethical challenges	43, 45, 50
16	Leadership behaviours that have diminished ethical challenges	42, 44, 46, 48, 81
17	Leaders' behaviours have more impact on ethical norms than written rules	9, 16, 56 – 67, 70, 121

Many of the focused codes were comprised of similar initial codes and many of the focused codes were relevant to multiple themes. When analyzing the focused codes to determine what common themes were amongst them, a conscious decision was made to place each focused code into only one theme. There were two reasons for this decision.

First, interchanging and multi-allocating the focused codes did not affect the total number of themes generated from the data. For example, focused codes #90, 94, and 114 address the importance of “communication”. Many researchers have historically considered communication to be a trainable skill;<sup>418</sup> others have asserted that it is more useful to regard communication as an observable behaviour.<sup>419</sup> While the exact allocation of these three

<sup>417</sup> Arguably, code #85 could have been allocated to Theme #2, as opposed to Theme #6. According to some participants, part of the reason media strongly compels “PSCs to publically demonstrate commitments to ethical behaviour” is that media often deliberately exaggerates or misrepresents PSCs’ behaviours. Exaggerations and misrepresentations can cause people to misunderstand the missions of PSCs.

<sup>418</sup> Many popular communications skills models are based in the parent, teacher and leader “effectiveness training” research of Gordon (Gordon, 2001, 2008, 2010). Many fields of medicine also emphasize communication skills training for practitioners and patients (Brown & Bylund, 2008; Evans, Stanley, Mestrovic, & Rose, 1991; Rollnick, Kinnersley, & Butler, 2002).

<sup>419</sup> Plum (1981) asserts that communication is not a “trainable skill” but a manner of “educated behaviour” that enables one to understand others and make him/herself understood. Some medical practitioners suggest that, while communication may be a skill, it is only measurable through observable behaviours and, thus, communication is best regarded as a behaviour (Van Dalen et al., 2001). Non-verbal communication, for

focused codes between themes #13 and 14 might be debatable, rearranging them did not materially change the sum of the properties, dimensions, or variations of either theme. The findings of this thesis remained equally valid regardless of whether “communication” was regarded as a skill, behaviour, or both.

Secondly, the results of this thesis could be communicated more clearly and concisely when focused codes were allocated to only one theme each. Devising a Venn diagram or similar model to illustrate how some focused codes could belong to multiple themes was determined to be unnecessary: such a model would lack explanatory power because of the lack of impact that multi-allocation had on the theoretical coding process.

### Theoretical Coding Results

During the theoretical coding phase, relationships between the 17 themes were examined and the significance of each theme was considered in relation to the thesis’s three sub-questions (poised at the start of the thesis). The research underlying this thesis referenced Glaser’s (1978) 18 coding “families” during theoretical coding to help identify relationships between themes and to substantiate theoretical statements.<sup>420</sup> The following paragraphs briefly explain how each theme contributes to this thesis. These themes are discussed in further detail and summarized in tablet-form in the subsequent chapter.

Five themes appeared to explain some of the factors that influence how PSC personnel understand security provision in a commercial context. Themes #1, 3, and 5 served to define the properties and boundaries of PSCs; these themes accomplished this largely by distinguishing PSCs from national militaries. This distinction was merited because of the propensity and consequences of contractors confusing the two types of organizations. Theme #2 helped to identify and explain factors that cause some stakeholders to misunderstand the properties and boundaries of PSCs. Theme #4 helped to explain the reciprocal relationship between PSC personnel’s self-identities and their understandings of security in a commercial context.

Four themes appeared to explain some of the factors that influence how PSC personnel understand their personal roles in establishing ethical climate within PSCs. Themes #6, 9, and 10 helped to identify a range of factors that influence the self-identities of PSC personnel;

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example, is studied amongst humans and in the animal kingdom as observable behaviours (Barker, 2002, p. 51; Smith, 1980).

<sup>420</sup> (Glaser, 1978, p. 74)

and the consequences of those self-identities. Themes #6, 7, and 8 helped to explain the behavioural control mechanisms available to PSC leaders; understanding these control mechanisms was found to be important because PSC leaders interpret their roles and responsibilities, in part, based on the powers that are granted to them by superiors. Theme #8 additionally appeared to offer an explanation of how and why certain factors (namely, reputation and profit) acted as control mechanisms. In total, these four themes explained the roles and responsibilities of seven different types of leaders; and these four themes offered an additional explanation of responsibilities inherent to all leaders serving in (or alongside) PSCs.

Two themes appeared to explain some of the factors that influence the personal motivations of PSC personnel to uphold the responsibilities inherent to their positions. Themes #11 and 12 offered explanations of negative and positive influences, respectively. Both themes also contained information that made it possible to theorize about how and why certain influences impacted upon PSC personnel's motivations. While negative influences were found to detract from PSC personnel's motivations, positive influences were found to mitigate negative influences. In total, four negative influences were found that detracted from PSC personnel's motivations at the cultural and institutional levels; two negative influences detracted from PSC personnel's motivations at the environmental level. One positive influence appeared to have some ability to mitigate negative influences at the cultural and institutional levels; two positive influences appeared to have some ability to mitigate negative influences at environmental level.

Themes #13 and 14 offered some explanation of the range of leadership skills and behaviours that impact on the drivers of ethical behaviour explain in themes #1-12. These two themes suggested that leadership behaviours have more influence on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel than written rules or regulations. In total, four influential leadership skills and seven influential leadership behaviours were identified.

Finally, three themes appeared to offer a partial explanation of the magnitude of the impact of leadership on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. Themes #15, 16, and 17 provided some insight into the degree to which leadership affected ethical behaviour. Additionally, theme #17 appeared to explain how and why leadership might have the degree of impact that it has.

The following chart summarizes the primary relationships found between the 17 themes and five central themes pertinent to this thesis's central questions:

Summary of 17 Themes and Relationships			
#	Themes	Relationship to Central Theme <sup>421</sup>	Central Theme
1	The organizational objectives of PSCs are limited to commercial service provision	Defines properties & boundaries	Understandings of security in a commercial context
2	Civilians, soldiers, and contractors can misunderstand the missions of PSCs	IDs & explains some misunderstandings	
3	Military training and experience provides a baseline for PSCs	Defines properties & boundaries	
4	Contractors view themselves as effective and efficient security providers	Depicts and explains self-identities	
5	PSCs cannot function by following military models	Defines properties & boundaries	
6	Ethical standards are determined and enforced by top-down processes	IDs a self-identity & a control mechanism	Understandings of their personal roles in establishing an ethical climate
7	Militaries and PSCs have very different systems of accountability	IDs a control mechanism	
8	Reputational concerns and profitability as a motivator to protect reputation	IDs a control mechanism; Means-Goals	
9	Factors that help leaders to understand and fulfil their personal roles	IDs self-identities & consequences	
10	Factors that inhibit leaders from understanding and fulfilling their personal roles	IDs self-identities & consequences	
11	Negative (detracting) influences on personal motivations to behave ethically	IDs causes & consequences	Personal motivations to uphold responsibilities inherent to roles
12	Positive (mitigating) influences on personal motivations to behave ethically	IDs causes & consequences	
13	Skills that help leaders to establish and maintain an ethical climate	IDs causes & consequences	Leadership skills & behaviours that affect the drivers of ethical behaviour
14	Behaviours that help leaders to establish and maintain an ethical climate	IDs causes & consequences	
15	Leadership behaviours that have changed ethical challenges	IDs degree of affect	The magnitude of leadership's impact on ethical behaviour
16	Leadership behaviours that have diminished ethical challenges	IDs degree of affect	
17	Leaders' behaviours have more impact on ethical norms than written rules	IDs causes, consequences, & degree of affect	

## Summary

This chapter summarized the findings of the research underlying this thesis in order to show how the coding process led to the information analyzed in Chapter Five. Summarizing the findings of this thesis's research also helped to demonstrate the validity and academic rigor underlying the codes and themes generated from the collected data. Presenting the findings before engaging in a detailed discussion of the findings made the research process more transparent: this thesis's research was made more replicable and the impact of the applied GT methodology was easier to discern. Although findings from each question were

<sup>421</sup> (Glaser, 1978, p. 74)



highlighted to immediately inform readers of the relevancy of the data, detailed analytical discussions of the codes and themes were deliberately postponed until the next chapter.

The GT methodology used in the research underlying this thesis affected the type of data that was collected and the processes used to analyze data. The participant selection process yielded a larger sample size than other GT studies similar to this one. The sample was large enough to suggest (but not prove) that labour mobility in the private security industry was high enough that a small sample size could yield information that was demographically representative of the PSC leader population. This improved the validity and accuracy of the data. However, because GT methods rely on theoretical sampling, the sample population could not be considered experientially representative of the total PSC population. The findings of this thesis, therefore, are only useful for determining ranges of issues, for example: the range of leadership skills and behaviours that might be influential; and the range of ethical challenges that PSC personnel might face. The findings do not make it possible to prioritize or rank any of these skills, behaviours, or ethical challenges in any meaningful way. Finally, the non-representativeness of the sample population means that the findings can only inform a substantive theory that would be limited to the sample population.<sup>422</sup> Because a theory so limited in scope would have little value in practice, this thesis limits its goal to simply providing new information that could be useful to the future generation of a robust substantive theory.

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<sup>422</sup> “The generality of the claim [of any GT research] needs to be proportionate to the thoroughness of the data collection...Any qualitative study without extensive data can make only limited claims; small interview studies that make general claims stand on shaky ground” (Charmaz, 2008, p. 410).

## Chapter Five: Analyses of Findings

Having explained how codes and themes were discovered in the previous chapter, Chapter Five analyses those codes and themes to make sense of the data. The analytical process used in this research is known as ‘theoretical integration.’<sup>423</sup> During theoretical integration, codes and themes are combined, compared, and contrasted to form detailed narratives according to the relationships that the themes share with each other. Codes and themes are presented in a logical order according to the information that is relevant to the thesis’s questions.<sup>424</sup> The resulting narratives directly address the sub-questions posed at the start of the thesis. Footnotes throughout the narratives serve to inform readers of how the information in Chapter Five draws from the data presented in Chapter Four.

The narrative presented in this chapter is organized according to this thesis’s three sub-questions. This chapter first explains important drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments. Based on an analysis of the codes and themes found in Chapter Four, these drivers appear to include: PSC personnel’s understandings of security in the commercial context; leaders’ understandings of their personal roles in establishing an organization-wide ethical climate; and, finally, PSC personnel’s personal motivations to fulfil the responsibilities inherent to their roles. Secondly, analyses determined that several key leadership skills and behaviours appear to affect the drivers of ethical behaviour. Thirdly, this chapter discusses the apparent magnitude of leadership’s impact on the drivers of ethical behaviour. This chapter concludes with a summary of this thesis’ findings, which offer a defensible explanation of the extent to which leadership influences the ethical behaviour of British private security contractors operating in hostile environments.

### Three Drivers of Ethical Behaviour for Contractors in Hostile Environments

Twelve of the 17 themes generated from the data presented in Chapter Four indicated that the ethical behaviour of contractors is driven by three factors: (1) PSC personnel’s understandings of security in the commercial context; (2) Leaders’ understandings of their

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<sup>423</sup> In research using a GT methodology, this analytical process can be considered synonymous with “theoretical sorting” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 216)

<sup>424</sup> For example, codes that define the properties of a category may be ordered to precede codes that discuss the importance of a category; codes that appear to discuss causes or catalysts may be ordered to precede codes that appear to discuss effects (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 46, 65, 115).

personal roles in establishing an organization-wide ethical climate; and (3) PSC personnel's personal motivations to fulfil the responsibilities inherent in their roles.

When viewed together, the general concepts underlying these three factors seem to compliment this thesis's definition of leadership: "the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to achieve a common goal." The way in which PSC personnel understand 'security' in the commercial context informs their understanding of the "purpose" of PSCs. Leaders' understandings of their personal role in establishing an organization-wide ethical climate inform personnel of the tasks that they've been directed to perform. And, finally, PSC personnel's personal motivations are affected by leader decisions and actions.

### (1) Understanding Security in a Commercial Context

The first factor driving the ethical behaviour of contractors involves how leaders and contractors understand security in a commercial context. The data presented in Chapter Four revealed that the overwhelming majority of PSC personnel come from military organizations,<sup>425</sup> however militaries and PSCs have distinctly different purposes and their members are accountable to different stakeholders.<sup>426</sup> The following paragraphs in this section explain how PSC personnel's cognizance of these differences affects leaders' and contractors' understandings of the social and ethical norms that apply to them. PSC personnel must realize that they are no longer in the military and that the private security industry is characterized by a unique set of organizational objectives, ethical norms, and ethical standards. Security provision in a commercial context requires contractors to move away from firepower-oriented solutions and to rely more heavily on the support of local populations when devising security solutions. The extent to which PSC leaders perceive themselves as commercial security professionals as opposed to professional soldiers can noticeably influence contractors' willingness to adhere to prescribed ethical norms and standards.

PSCs can be discerned from militaries by examining the purposes and stakeholders of each organization. Militaries are organizations with mandates to protect their host nations.

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<sup>425</sup> Approximately 95% of armed contractors working for PSCs have national military training (Interviews #6, 11, 19, and 21). Additionally, military training and experience provides an important baseline for PSCs (Theme #3: comprised of focused codes #68, 106, 124, and 125)

<sup>426</sup> Unlike militaries, which are public service, non-profit organizations, PSCs must be concerned about profitability and commercial viability (Theme #1: comprised of focused codes #22 and 26 – 30)

Due to the importance of their mandates and their access to state resources, militaries are arguably given more latitude than PSCs regarding human and financial costs. Human and financial costs are defined here in terms of both receiving and inflicting casualties and material losses. One benefit of using PSCs over national militaries is that politicians usually needn't report contractor casualties with the same fidelity as national soldier casualties;<sup>427</sup> and, in recent conflicts, casualty rates amongst contractors have been comparable to or possibly higher than those of national militaries.<sup>428</sup> However, militaries are organizations capable of offensive action. Militaries are therefore logistically, organizationally, and culturally structured to take very high numbers of casualties if necessary; militaries can request additional funding from governments at will; and militaries can backfill personnel through drafts.<sup>429</sup>

Militaries are also solely accountable to States. States (and their populations) generally consider militaries to be indispensable components of their national architecture.<sup>430</sup> Because of their mandate, non-profitability and even the gross misconduct of soldiers does not pose an existential threat to military organizations. In the wakes of several scandals, some militaries have successfully attributed bad behaviour to a few individuals in uniform, leaving the organization's reputation effectively intact.<sup>431</sup>

Conversely, PSCs must remain profitable in order to continue to exist. As a result, all leaders within PSCs are required to behave in ways that maximize long-term profits for the organization.<sup>432</sup> The commercial context in which PSCs operate has an effect on most priorities. Ensuring contractor welfare, for example, is an important priority that must occur within the confines of profitability.<sup>433</sup> While most militaries offer a range of benefits and extend care to soldiers' families, commercial imperatives can prevent PSCs from offering the same benefits. PSCs also lack the redundant mechanisms, medical facilities, and insurance

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<sup>427</sup> (Avant, 2006, p. 512; Dunigan, 2011, p. 157; Singer, 2005, p. 4)

<sup>428</sup> (Dunigan, Farmer, Burns, Hawks, & Setodji, 2013, p. 36, *Table 3.8*)

<sup>429</sup> (Spearin, 2011, p. 202)

<sup>430</sup> Weberian arguments on states' monopolies on violence are founded in the belief that nationalized police and military forces are essential for providing legitimate protection and defence services (Weber, 1978). Many authors question whether PSCs impede on states' monopolies on violence (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2011, pp. 4–7; Krahmann, 2010, p. 3; Maogoto & Sheehy, 2006, p. 5). Salzman (2008, p. 862) plainly distinguishes PSCs from military forces in his critique of the legality of PSCs under Additional Protocol I to Article 47 of the Geneva Convention (United Nations, 1949).

<sup>431</sup> (Liu, 2013)

<sup>432</sup> (ICRC, 2010, pp. 29–32)

<sup>433</sup> (Theme #1: focused code #28: 10 sources; 20 references)

packages that would be needed to continue functioning in the face of very high casualty rates and material losses.<sup>434</sup>

Another distinguishing factor between PSCs and militaries is that PSC leaders are accountable to perishable client bases.<sup>435</sup> Leaders must first win and retain business;<sup>436</sup> they must then prioritize their clients' safety and satisfaction above all or most other concerns.<sup>437</sup> Excessively violent behaviour has the potential to irreparably tarnish a PSC's reputation to the point that profitability is impossible.<sup>438</sup> Non-profitability, for any reason, poses an existential threat to PSCs. One participant's statement differentiated PSCs from militaries and described how non-profitability can cause a PSC to cease to exist as an organization:

“Who is the army's client? The government. It's not the same because it doesn't live or die as a commercial entity. If the army fucks up, then a General will get sacked but the army rolls along. But the consequences of a company doing that [will cause clients to] ditch you in droves because you turned out to be a horror: that company is screwed. People within it will not find work...As [an employee of] a private security company, my income, my house, my mortgage, my nursery care, [etc.] is entirely dependent on my job. And, if a client won't pay me, I'm screwed. Armies just get paid to go and do stuff. A standing army is a standing army. It will be there regardless.”<sup>439</sup>

Narrowing the organizational objective of PSCs to commercial “profit” and the list of stakeholders to “clients” presents an overly-simplistic view of the industry. However, contractors who understand that PSCs must remain profitable to exist are more able to leave behind the social and ethical norms accepted by the military and to adhere to those required by the private security industry. PSCs exist according to their abilities to provide safe environments for their clients. Lacking the firepower and support inherent to militaries, PSCs are compelled to seek more holistic, cooperative security solutions in order to remain profitable in the long-run.<sup>440</sup> Subsequent paragraphs in this section discuss the diverse array of factors that affect profitability and client welfare in greater detail. Contractors'

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<sup>434</sup> (Spearin, 2011, p. 202)

<sup>435</sup> Although it is more related to understanding the means (reputation) by which leaders can achieve their goals (profit), focused code #55 also helps to explain a fundamental difference between the missions and pursuant conduct of PSC and military personnel.

<sup>436</sup> (Theme #1: focused code #30: 6 sources; 11 references)

<sup>437</sup> (Theme #1: focused codes #26 and 29)

<sup>438</sup> (Liu, 2013); Although it is more related to understanding the means (reputation) by which leaders can achieve their goals (profit), focused code #53 also helps to explain a fundamental difference between the missions and pursuant conduct of PSC and military personnel.

<sup>439</sup> (Interview #17)

<sup>440</sup> (Theme #5 comprised of focused codes #47, 49, 105, and 118)

understandings of this array of factors, however, are dependent on contractors understanding the first link in the logical chain: PSCs must remain profitable to exist.

Chapter Four revealed that there are several pressures that cause civilians, soldiers, and even contractors to misunderstand the importance of the commercial context in which PSCs operate.<sup>441</sup> The majority of armed contractors have spent their formative years in militaries and most have had very little or no previous commercial experience. Without first-hand commercial experience to draw from, understanding the differences between PSCs and militaries begins as an abstract exercise. Conversely, for civilians without first-hand military experience to draw from, understanding the differences between PSCs and militaries begins as an abstract exercise. Two participants explained the consequences of PSC personnel failing to recognize differences between PSC and military roles and objectives. The first example highlights a negative impact on morale and retention:

One of the...guys that I worked with was very forthright in his opinions, very loud, and he used to have a hell of a time with the teams; or, rather, the Team Leaders. I know of two guys who quit the company because of him and how he used to conduct himself. It was almost as if he thought he was still in the army... the first issue we had was a 'believability' factor. While he had lots of experience [in the army] (he left the army as a WO1 or as an RSM), within the commercial industry he didn't have a great deal of experience. And you could almost tell from the way he spoke to people like he was an RSM. He would speak at people as opposed to with people. You know, he would talk at them. He would make poor decisions; operational decisions. That, whilst they weren't dangerous in the current climate, they'd probably have been questionable if the situation had changed.<sup>442</sup>

A second example highlights a negative impact on safety and service provision:

A guy just leaving the army may have been a fantastic soldier with a great career, [but he] doesn't understand close protection in a hostile environment. He doesn't understand the protocol and etiquette...They were fantastic if you get into a fight but absolutely shit at avoiding a fight in the first place. They got into trouble because they didn't have the skill set, the mindset, the discipline, or the maturity to do what they were hired to do: which was to 'protect' or avoid trouble. These guys wanted to fight and they were very capable when they got into a fight but that is not what the job is about. Deter-Detect-Delay. That is what the job is. You "Deter" the enemy: you deter the enemy by presenting a professional image and looking after your client in a respectful manner around the local populace without infringing on their lifestyle; which was possible to do. And if there was a threat or a perceived threat there (if you

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<sup>441</sup> (Theme #2 comprised of focused codes #12, 31, and 38); Although it is more relevant to determining how leaders understand their personal roles in creating ethical climates, focused code #85 also helps to explain how civilians, soldiers, and contractors can misunderstand the missions of PSCs

<sup>442</sup> (Interview #2)

did “detect” one) then you just got on with it. You got your client out of there hopefully without firing any rounds or ramming anybody off the road to get out of there...There were rogue...individual team leaders and rogue individual teams who would always let the side down, now and again. They were really disappointing and they pissed me off.<sup>443</sup>

To complicate matters, misleading imagery and information further distorts peoples’ perceptions of PSCs. An immediate stumbling block is that PSCs and militaries are often visually similar; each having a distinctly ‘militarized’ appearance.<sup>444</sup> Keeping PSCs and militaries visually disparate is important. Visual imagery should make it clear to hostile actors and contractors alike that PSCs are not performing offensive military tasks.<sup>445</sup> Before leaders can help others distinguish between the two organizations, leaders must first understand the distinctions themselves. One participant emphasizes the risks inherent to the militarized appearances and operating styles of some PSCs:

There is a major problem with NGOs being perceived as militarized which makes them a legitimate target to terrorist organizations; which makes, in turn, the job of a security company even more difficult... Many [NGOs] have their own contracts with DynCorps and other [private security] forces who are very militarized and [who], at the beginning of the Iraq war, [behaved awfully].<sup>446</sup>

This point was exemplified by discussing the dangers posed by PSCs that simultaneously take on clients from both the government and commercial sectors:

If you are [a PSC] working for ISAF guarding a military base or, for part of your contract, you’ve got convoys running from Kandahar or Kabul escorting convoys with proper military equipment, then you are doing a military contract. If I were an NGO worker or if I worked for the UN; then I wouldn’t hire the same contractor contracted to provide my protection... If the UN [or an NGO] was to contract with the [PSC] who was providing security to the Italian military in Afghanistan, then you’d have the military [and the UN or the NGO] guarded by the same people.<sup>447</sup>

When the same PSCs are seen providing support to NGOs, commercial clients, and militaries, then it is possible for PSCs to become a common thread that runs through all

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<sup>443</sup> (Interview #13)

<sup>444</sup> (Theme #2: focused code #38: 5 sources; 12 references)

<sup>445</sup> Debates about what constitutes an “offensive” or “inherently military” task are on-going. Some services, including equipment or intelligence provision, may be used for both offensive and defensive activities (Whyte, 2003, pp. 594–595). Furthermore, from a hostile combatant’s perspective, even PSCs “who supply low-quality guards provide a means to free up the highly trained professionals for high-intensity operations” (Gumedze, 2011, p. 10).

<sup>446</sup> (Interview #1)

<sup>447</sup> (Interview #1)

three organizations. Hostile actors and local communities can cease to distinguish between the organizations. The following quote concludes the point by noting difficulties that stem from militarized appearances and operating styles:

The future is that NGOs are moving away from the military and private security companies are moving away from the military. We shouldn't be perceived as military companies. We are private security organizations... But companies that do work for military organizations bring problems on themselves. Unfortunately, the problems they bring on themselves leak to the rest of the industry. And onto some of the non-profit aid organizations like the International Red Cross and Medecins Sans Frontiers [making] people like them [be] perceived as legitimate targets; which is wrong: they shouldn't be. Looking after the security of a company that is perceived as a legitimate target makes your job (or my job) even harder.<sup>448</sup>

Mainstream media was also cited for misrepresenting PSCs and their activities.<sup>449</sup> US media, in particular, has been accused of hampering peoples' abilities to clearly understand the industry by mixing terminology and lumping both offensive (PMCs) and defensive (PSCs) service providers in the same category (PMSCs).<sup>450</sup> Confusing imagery and information encourages contractors to perceive their civilian roles in PSCs as extensions of their military service. One participant explained the perceptions of many contractors:

Those who didn't know what to do [when they finished their military careers] would go into private security thinking, "Ok. One day you're wearing a [military] uniform; the next day you're sort of doing the same job but in civilian clothes."<sup>451</sup>

Another participant's quote explains a negative consequence of failing to understand the fundamental difference between military service and the private security industry:

One of the big problems for me from guys coming out of the military and trying to break into the corporate private security world... is that they think of it simply as an extension of their military service for a bit more money. They are completely incapable of thinking about the corporate spectrum, which effectively is shooting the goose that lays the golden egg because it is the corporate spectrum that creates the marketplace.<sup>452</sup>

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<sup>448</sup> (Interview #1)

<sup>449</sup> Two respondents contributing information to Theme #2 (focused codes #31 and 38) noted that popular media exaggerated and inaccurately represented PSC activities.

<sup>450</sup> Nearly all private security service providers existing today are pledged to provide only defensive service. PSCs make deliberate efforts to distance themselves from PMCs (Krahmann, 2012, p. 363). However, the labels "PMSC" and "Mercenaries" (*derogatory*) persist in mainstream media.

<sup>451</sup> (Interview #12)

<sup>452</sup> (Interview #8)



Without a clear understanding of the commercial context in which PSCs operate, contractors are less likely to leave behind the social and ethical norms accepted by the military and to adhere to those required by the private security industry.

Despite exacerbating identity challenges, military training and experience was almost unanimously considered essential.<sup>453</sup> Military service was said to provide foundational training and an important cultural baseline for PSC personnel. One statement expresses doubt that non-military personnel could perform well in a militarized hostile environment:

I would have tipped my hat to anyone without a military background performing in a world full of military-style teams in high-threat areas in a very military-type of organization.<sup>454</sup>

The next statement demonstrates the full range of participants' beliefs by suggesting that a military background is absolutely essential:

[He had] no military experience whatsoever. And then there was a discussion to put him onto a rig as a site security manager. And that was basically the catalyst for me resigning from the company because I disagreed completely with the decision... And the reason I disagree is [in addition to not having prior experience working with LNs]...if something does happen, then a [Close Protection] course in the UK doesn't teach him anything... [You need] operational military experience...if that rig site would have [received indirect fire] or if he would have had some kind of complex attack, I have no doubt whatsoever that he wouldn't have had a clue of what to do. Because whilst there is a written policy, it doesn't count for the guy bleeding out next to you while you are trying to deal with a client, while you are on an industrial site. You need that military experience; you need that operational experience for incident management, really.<sup>455</sup>

In addition to practical, technical skills, the value of military training and experience appears to be that it ingrains an ethos into PSC personnel that emphasizes the importance of leaders' individual responsibilities.<sup>456</sup> PSC leaders who had served as Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) in militaries were considered to have acquired valuable leadership experience that could not be easily obtained in a civilian job.<sup>457</sup> Compared to NCOs, PSC leaders who had served as officers were considered to have an improved ability to coach

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<sup>453</sup> (23 of 24 interviews = 95.8%); (Theme #3 comprised of focused codes #68, 106, 12, and 125)

<sup>454</sup> (Interview #19)

<sup>455</sup> (Interview #2)

<sup>456</sup> (Theme #3: focused code #106: 10 sources; 15 references)

<sup>457</sup> (Theme #3: focused code #124: 5 sources; 7 references)

problems and decisions within their proper contexts.<sup>458</sup> A common ethos (even one derived from the military) and a common understanding of how to make decisions within hierarchical organizations appear essential to controlling the conduct of contractors in hostile environments.<sup>459</sup>

A more quantifiable contribution of several years of military training and experience may be that the average age and maturity levels of PSC personnel appears to be higher than those of military personnel. On average, PSC personnel appear to have more months (or years) of deployment experience than the average soldier and PSC personnel may be more self-disciplined. Suggestions about self-discipline are arguable but supported by the fact that many armed contractors operate with much less administrative oversight than national soldiers. Contractors are self-employed consultants who are often required to purchase their own equipment, manage their own transportation, and perform other tasks without the same administrative support available to military soldiers. The tooth-to-tail ratio (the ratio of armed, operational personnel compared to administrative support personnel) for militaries can be as high as 1:12. The tooth-to-tail ratio for PSCs can be as low as 20:1.<sup>460</sup> If some officials' assertions about price differentials are correct<sup>461</sup> and contractors are, on average, highly experienced and disciplined, then PSCs have the potential to be very efficient security providers.<sup>462</sup>

An analysis of the data presented in Chapter Four, specifically, Themes #1 – 5 and their associated focused codes, indicated that PSC leaders' and contractors' understandings of security in a commercial context is the first factor driving the ethical behaviour of contractors. Although military training, experience, and ethos offer some advantages to PSC personnel, ethical behaviour cannot be guaranteed by strict adherence to military models.<sup>463</sup> Commercial clients favouring commercial models can often be more reliable sources of income than government or military clients;<sup>464</sup> PSC training can give leaders influence and

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<sup>458</sup> (Theme #3: focused code #125: 5 sources; 6 references)

<sup>459</sup> (Theme #3: focused code #106: 10 sources; 15 references); Although it is more relevant to determining specific influential skills, focused code #108 also supports this thesis finding that military experiences are, to a limited extent, important to controlling the conduct of contractors in hostile environments.

<sup>460</sup> (US Government, 2007a, p. 95)

<sup>461</sup> Debates about whether PSCs can provide security services at lower costs than militaries are ongoing. Cost savings analyses limited to the specific roles outsourced to PSCs, such as close protection, fixed site security, and convoy protection, have not been conclusive. However there is evidence to suggest that, under certain circumstances, PSCs can offer value for money (US Government, 2007a, pp. 87, 96; US Government: Congressional Budget Office, 2008, pp. 2, 14).

<sup>462</sup> (Theme #4: comprised of focused codes #119 and 126)

<sup>463</sup> (Theme #5: comprised of focused codes #47, 49, 105, and 118)

<sup>464</sup> (Theme #5: focused code #49: 5 sources; 7 references)

expert power that military training cannot;<sup>465</sup> and a person's military experience or service record is not a guaranteed indicator of how well a person will adapt to PSC norms.<sup>466</sup> The commercial context in which PSCs operate, the nature of the threats faced by PSCs, and the stakeholders that PSCs are accountable to require contractors to adopt new identities as commercial security professionals. Negative pressures on behaviour that stem from institutional carry-over and inaccurate depictions of PSCs obligate leaders to make a conscious effort to differentiate PSCs from militaries. Clearly differentiating between PSCs and militaries helps contractors to understand security in a commercial context and, subsequently, to accept the new set of social and ethical norms that apply to them. One participant succinctly summarized the point:

The great myth of PSCs is that they are similar to the army. No, they aren't. They are fundamentally different.<sup>467</sup>

## (2) Leaders' Understandings of their Personal Roles

A second factor driving the ethical behaviour of contractors involves how leaders understand their personal roles in establishing an organization-wide ethical climate. Leaders must ascribe ethical facilitation and enforcement responsibilities to themselves (as a function of their roles as leaders) to ensure that PSC personnel understand and follow the correct set of ethical norms. Ethical climates are created through the processes, standards, and norms that are 'proactively' supervised by decision-makers at all levels. However, ethical standards are determined and enforced by top-down processes.<sup>468</sup> Although many corporate leaders are geographically distant from regional, project, and team-level personnel positioned throughout the world, it is necessary for corporate leaders to actively pursue information, enforce diligent reporting, and investigate inconsistencies.<sup>469</sup> Proactive supervision by corporate leaders helps to ensure that ethical infractions are detected and corrected.

To cultivate a healthy ethical climate, leaders at all levels must be fully-conscious of the influence they have. Leaders must be aware of both their general influence as authority figures<sup>470</sup> and the specific influence they are likely to have based on their positions within

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<sup>465</sup> (Theme #5: focused code #105: 11 sources; 26 references)

<sup>466</sup> (Theme #5: focused code #118: 9 sources; 21 references)

<sup>467</sup> (Interview #17)

<sup>468</sup> (Theme #6: comprised of focused codes #4, 8, 14, 82, 84 – 88, and 91)

<sup>469</sup> (Theme #6: focused code #14: 9 sources; 20 references).

<sup>470</sup> Focused codes #14 and 91 address types of influence that all leaders have by virtue of their status as leaders

their organization's hierarchy.<sup>471</sup> The extent to which PSC leaders feel themselves to be responsible for facilitating and enforcing ethical standards can noticeably influence a company's ethical climate; which, in turn, can noticeably influence contractors' willingness to adhere to prescribed ethical norms and standards. One participant's statement summarized how all leaders at multiple levels of decision-making authority have a responsibility to proactively keep themselves informed so that they can identify infractions and enforce ethical standards:

All Leaders: The Team Leader...the Project Director or the Operations Manager or the Program Director... any of these guys should be [involved] and understanding so that they can spot changes. If you don't equally have a method by which you can spot change; meaning: *'if you don't ask the right questions'* [emphasis added], then you'll never know.<sup>472</sup>

Other participants' statements indicated that some responsibilities are inherent to specific levels of decision-making authority. For example, client leaders are best-positioned to specify minimum behavioural and performance standards in contracts.<sup>473</sup> Corporate leaders are positioned to create policies that prescribe levels of training.<sup>474</sup> Regional leaders are positioned to evaluate corporate policies according to the circumstances in specific regions.<sup>475</sup> Project leaders must interpret and operationalize corporate standards.<sup>476</sup> Team leaders are generally best positioned to identify and interrupt unethical behaviours as they occur.<sup>477</sup> The following five quotes exemplify how leaders at specific hierarchical positions can influence ethical climates in specific ways:

Client Leaders: Many big companies like Exxon and smaller companies as well write *very* tightly drawn contracts, with a lot of monitoring, a lot of inspections of armouries, fingerprinting the weapons and ballistic testing and registration of all the weapons; also, restrictions of the weapon types, obviously. Really, I would always advise a client working with a private military or security company to have a liaison officer with them; or a security manager to be co-located with the unit that you hired

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<sup>471</sup> Focused codes # 4, 8, 82, and 84 – 88 address types of influence that specific leaders have due to their positions within their organizations' hierarchies.

<sup>472</sup> (Interview #17)

<sup>473</sup> (Theme #6: focused code #82: 16 sources; 111 references)

<sup>474</sup> Although it is more relevant to determining specific influential skills, focused code #83 also supports assertions that corporate leaders have a unique responsibility for creating policies that help establish organization-wide ethical climates.

<sup>475</sup> (Theme #6: focused code #4: 9 sources; 17 references)

<sup>476</sup> (Theme #6: focused codes #4, 84, and 87)

<sup>477</sup> (Theme #6: focused codes #8, 84, and 86)

to do whatever it is that they are doing. Regular monitoring, independent, and vetted.<sup>478</sup>

Corporate Leaders: [Corporate policies require] various induction packages. Senior leaders come through [headquarters] and get an induction package over a day-long period...they'll get a brief in the case of corruption training; they'll sit down with one of our lawyers and go through all of the implications of corruptions training and understand what constitutes bribery and corruption in terms of UK law. Those who are middle or below...will be part of an induction package in-country. So, they'll get [training] through the country management of the country concerned...In the case of countries that don't have a country management office, they'll get that on the project. So, they'll be inducted and told what is and what constitutes ethical behaviour. There is also continuation training which we are mandated to carry out internally; which means, on a monthly basis, we are taking our people back through to make sure that they all understand and they are all compliant...So, the package is scaled to be relevant to the level you are going in at.<sup>479</sup>

Regional Leaders: Corporate management is easy... You [create] the procedures...and pass them down the line, expecting them to be put in practice. Where the disjoint is in any management system...is that the policies exist, they are there on paper, but...when it comes to the evaluation of the policy, or to correct anything that is remiss, there is no management done. [Regional managers] are guys that have either been around the industry or who are straight out of the military and they've got no management experience outside of that. So their idea of management is to pass policies down through email and to forget about them...You don't get any evaluation of policy documents, you don't get guys coming out on the ground to look at health and safety issues, and if the guys have got a problem, it is just recently that, more often than not, our [regional] managements' answer to any problem on the ground is that "if the guys don't like it, they can [leave]...fine." And that is the level of [regional] management across the security industry...Evaluating your policies and constantly updating your procedures is a constant part of a management model. It isn't just to "fire and forget."...Nobody ever checks on [anything] that the operations manager says unless something goes wrong. This is management in hindsight. Whenever there is a problem, everyone runs around to find out what we've done wrong and then puts procedures in place to fix it and forgets about those procedures until the next crisis.<sup>480</sup>

Project Leaders: So...not necessarily to dilute the standard but we have a series of working groups to try and offer up other ideas and mechanisms which people can try to get the best [out] of people...the working groups are directed more towards the Team Leaders and the 2ICs where we can sit down...and discuss issues...We need to make some compromises that don't affect the [company] standard but allow us to work with a 'raw product' or 'raw material'...Rather than [policies] being very much "off-the-shelf"...as happened on [another big project] where everything was given to

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<sup>478</sup> (Interview #18); this quote was modified to include big and small companies based on a subsequent interview with the same participant.

<sup>479</sup> (Interview #9)

<sup>480</sup> (Interview #1)

them and everything was there; there was very little effort involved because [policies were already] sort of tailor-made for them. So there are discussion groups and working groups to bounce ideas off and shape the future of the project.<sup>481</sup>

Team Leaders: He has to be harsh with him, to be honest. He has to sit him down and give him a reality check, saying 'Right. I'm not happy with your standards. You're mediocre at best. This is what I want to see with your kit and equipment: it should be set out like this; like mine. If you've got to invest in some kit, then go and get it because you look like a bag of shit. Ok? Your weapon: It's dusty. I've seen that it's dusty and we haven't even gone out on task yet. Yeah; we're in the desert and it does get dusty and that but I bet you if I look inside that weapon, it will be dusty inside as well.' You just have to keep on top of them at first; especially if you are a new team leader.<sup>482</sup>

One of this thesis' major findings is that ethical standards in PSCs are primarily determined and enforced by top-down processes.<sup>483</sup> The following statement explains the power that chief executives have and some of the tools available to executives to foster positive ethical climates:

It is the board and often the Chief Executive [Officer]; he sets the tone. [CEOs] turns around a company by making sure their ethos are cascaded all the way down from their positions...that is a very pragmatic business decision. It is not a section leader saying 'We're going to be the most 'green' section in the company.' He's got to take his lead from higher. It is definitely a top-down effort; absolutely. Good training; good orientation; people understanding what the ethos stands for; good workshops.<sup>484</sup>

Another participant further emphasized the top-down influence of leaders:

The decisions that I do or do not take at the top of an organization and the way that I take those decisions do have a bearing on the actions of people at the very bottom of the organization. If people look up and they see that [leaders] don't care and [leaders] are prepared to take shortcuts in order to gain commercial advantage, then that creates a climate where people believe that that is the right thing to do. It creates a culture of disobedience to the regulations.<sup>485</sup>

Analyses of the data presented in Chapter Four, specifically Themes #9 and its associated focused codes, revealed that senior leaders have two primary roles relative to subordinate leaders. The first is to ensure that subordinate leaders are aware of their roles as ethical role-

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<sup>481</sup> (Interview #5)

<sup>482</sup> (Interview #14)

<sup>483</sup> (Theme #6; 22 sources; 240 references)

<sup>484</sup> (Interview #18)

<sup>485</sup> (Interview #23)

models. PSC leaders ascribe meanings to themselves, others, and roles based on their social interactions with others throughout their companies' hierarchies.<sup>486</sup> Second, senior leaders must ensure that processes are in-place that empower subordinate leaders to enforce prescribed ethical norms and behaviours.<sup>487</sup> There is no consensus on which level of decision-making authority is most important to the establishment of an ethical climate within a PSC. While leaders at certain levels are better positioned than others to influence aspects of a PSC's ethical climate, no single leader can unilaterally guarantee ethical behaviour: communication and empowerment are essential.<sup>488</sup>

Given the commercial context in which PSCs exist, clients sit at the 'top' of the top-down process. Client leaders are arguably the first people in the chain-of-responsibility with the power to set, supervise, and audit ethical standards.<sup>489</sup> By demanding that ethical standards are written into contracts, clients can pair payments (the lifeblood of all commercial organizations including PSCs) with ethical behaviour.<sup>490</sup> When a client is willing and able to penalize a PSC for non-compliance with ethical standards, then the very existence of that PSC is, to some extent, threatened. The scope of penalties that clients can leverage is broad, but most are financial in nature. For example, clients can penalize vendors for misbehaviour through restitution demands, contract cancellations, and the denial of repeat business.<sup>491</sup> NGOs and public watchdog organizations may work independently or on the behalf of clients to discover ethical infractions; media organizations can then expose those infractions to the

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<sup>486</sup> (Theme #9: focused codes #1, 3, and 5); these focused codes describe the importance of senior leaders supporting their subordinate leaders. Focused code #23 describes the importance of all leaders interacting with others in their organizational hierarchies. Focused code #97 explains how ethical codes written by corporate leaders provide helpful frameworks for junior leaders to reference when faced with solving ethical problems.

<sup>487</sup> (Theme #9: focused codes #11, 96, and 112); these focused codes address the importance of senior leaders empowering junior leaders.

<sup>488</sup> There is no contradiction between the 'top-down enforcement' perspective and the 'all levels are important' perspective. The first finding, encompassed by theme #6, indicates the direction that power flows within PSCs. The second finding, encompassed by focused codes #4, 8, 14, 82, 84-88, and 91 is a dissection of Theme #6, which indicates there are important responsibilities at every level of decision-making authority.

<sup>489</sup> (Theme #6: focused code #82: 16 sources; 111 references); Brooks & Streng (2012, p. 316) also support this finding: "We should not lose sight of the fact that clients are most responsible for determining the level of professionalism and quality that they desire of their contractors. Their willingness to ignore and downplay standards has been the bane of the industry."

<sup>490</sup> This research acknowledges that there may be limits to clients' abilities to supervise and audit vendors. For example, client resources may limit some inspections to monthly or quarterly intervals. However, clients have a great deal of influence over the terms and conditions that they are willing to accept. To encourage ethical behaviour, such terms and conditions should be consistent with International Human Rights Laws outlined by the UN and Geneva Conventions and industry standards outlined by the ICoC. Supervisory processes, licenses, certifications, accreditations and membership in industry regulatory bodies are examples of other control mechanisms that clients can leverage when drafting contracts.

<sup>491</sup> Organizations that violate ethical norms in the pursuit of profit can be financially, legally, and socially punished (Bass, 2008, p. 728; Gill, 2011a, pp. 38-39).

public.<sup>492</sup> While most client-PSC relationships are managed in private, independent media organizations arguably help to determine and enforce ‘acceptable’ ethical standards by deciding what gets communicated to the general public.

Another group of leaders, extrinsic to PSCs who can influence ethical standards, includes commercial security training providers, licensing authorities, and accrediting bodies. Although training providers are subject to a variety of commercial pressures, trainers can indirectly contribute to the ethical climates within PSCs by influencing contractors at critical junctures in a contractor’s career. Most PSC personnel are required to certify themselves against industry or national standards; contractors must also maintain their skill sets with occasional refresher training. During these contact hours, training providers are positioned between PSCs and contractors. Based on guidance from licensing authorities and accrediting bodies, training providers can benchmark performance and conduct standards for the industry.<sup>493</sup>

Within PSCs, corporate leaders sit at the top of the ‘top-down’ process. With regards to establishing ethical climates, corporate leaders’ primary roles are to ensure that the processes within their companies are compatible with ethical standards and that those processes are communicated throughout their organizations’ hierarchies.<sup>494</sup> The minimum standards that corporate leaders are able to set are largely determined by what clients and relevant stakeholders (influenced by media) are willing to accept. This thesis does not mean to suggest that the corporate leaders of PSCs endeavour to set the lowest ethical standards possible; rather, it suggests that clients and other relevant stakeholders have some influence on the lower limits that the corporate leaders of PSCs are able to set. In addition to setting standards, corporate leaders must also ensure that systems are in place that empower subordinate leaders to enforce standards.<sup>495</sup> An array of techniques is available to leaders for communicating with and empowering subordinates. Many of these techniques are negotiable, but the seminal role of corporate leadership remains the same: setting standards and empowering others to enforce those standards.

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<sup>492</sup> (Theme #6: focused code #85: 8 sources; 17 references)

<sup>493</sup> (Theme #6: focused code #88: 1 source; 5 references)

<sup>494</sup> All organizations have ethical standards, whether those standards are low or high. Focused codes #14 and 83 suggest that corporate leaders are responsible for setting standards. McCuddy (2008, p. 10) seems to agree by asserting that all people have “values;” regardless of whether those values are constructive or destructive; McCuddy’s logic can be expanded to encompass ‘organizations’ as well. A complimentary assertion made by A. Chen et al.’s (1997, p. 855) is that ethical climates exist in all organizations, regardless of whether leaders intentionally or unintentionally foster them.

<sup>495</sup> (Theme #9: focused codes #11, 96, and 112); these focused codes address the importance of senior leaders empowering junior leaders.



Regional and sometimes project leaders are the first leaders in PSC hierarchies to receive standards from corporate level. As such, regional (and sometimes project) leaders are best-positioned to evaluate corporate policies and provide feedback on the policies' impact based on specific geographic locations.<sup>496</sup> Corporate policies and procedures, which may include (for example) whistle-blowing policies and serious incident reporting criteria, direct regional and project leaders to perform to certain standards.<sup>497</sup> Evaluating corporate policies provides an essential feedback-loop that ensures leaders at project or team levels are not directed to uphold impossible standards; or, to follow instructions that have unexpected unethical consequences.

Project leaders are generally the first leaders in PSC hierarchies with the authority to administratively discipline contractors for misconduct. As such, project leaders must interpret corporate standards and translate them into enforceable behavioural standards.<sup>498</sup> Although many project leaders have a great deal of autonomy within their projects, this autonomy is tempered by the policies that are supervised and enforced by corporate leaders. For project leaders to fulfil their personal roles in establishing an ethical climate, corporate policies must empower project leaders to take action against unethical conduct.

Finally, team level leaders play unique roles in establishing an organization-wide ethical climate within PSCs. Operating at the lowest echelon of decision-making authority, team leaders are generally positioned to identify and immediately correct unethical behaviours as they occur.<sup>499</sup> Team leaders commonly work more closely with armed contractors and LNs than any other leaders in PSCs and team leaders have the ability to delegate and personally supervise specific tasks on a daily basis. Although it would be difficult for a team leader to unilaterally enforce standards anywhere outside of his team, team leaders have a great deal of influence within their teams through example setting and sheer force of personality.

Analyses of the data presented in Chapter Four suggests that understanding one's personal role in creating an ethical climate is largely a function of 'awareness' and 'empowerment'.<sup>500</sup> 'Awareness' stems from the directions one has been given and 'empowerment' stems from the information and enforcement mechanisms available to leaders

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<sup>496</sup> (Theme #6: focused code #4: 9 sources; 17 references)

<sup>497</sup> Harned (2014), President of the Ethics Resource Center, states: "Internal vigilance by motivated employees is one of the best safeguards against wrongdoing. Ethics programs that encourage workers to step forward are common in the private sector but not in the government. If we want government workers to speak up, we need to create a culture in which blowing the whistle is expected and rewarded." The premise of her claim applies equally to PCS.

<sup>498</sup> (Theme #6: focused codes #4, 84, and 87)

<sup>499</sup> (Theme #6: focused codes #8, 84, and 86)

<sup>500</sup> (Focused code #44: 10 sources; 18 references) and (Focused code #11: 15 sources; 31 references)

as they direct others. To promote awareness, higher-level leaders must continuously inform subordinate leaders of their roles within the organizational hierarchy. Informing leaders can be done formally (i.e. through job descriptions or disseminated tasks) or informally (i.e. through holding people accountable for the extent to which they live up to unspoken expectations). To facilitate empowerment, policies that enable leaders to take action against unethical conduct must be in-place and enforced.<sup>501</sup> Leaders who are not empowered to remove or retrain sub-standard contractors<sup>502</sup> or to reward high-performing contractors<sup>503</sup> may have difficulties understanding how they should contribute towards establishing an ethical climate. Even when corporate policies are present, those policies must be coherent to ensure that junior leaders do not receive conflicting messages from senior leaders at different organizational levels.<sup>504</sup> Job availability on the open market must also not be so high that it undermines leaders' abilities to pressure contractors into behaving ethically.<sup>505</sup>

The internal mechanisms for holding private security personnel accountable for their actions are significantly different from the internal mechanisms inherent to militaries. Despite similarities between PSCs and militaries, PSC leaders are differently empowered than their military counterparts and from their former selves as military leaders.<sup>506</sup> Adapting to commercial systems of accountability is a critical task for PSC leaders; a critical task predicated on PSC leaders fully understanding security in a commercial context. Because of the commercial context in which PSCs exist, nearly all accountability mechanisms available to PSC leaders are grounded in financial interests. Reputation is a powerful motivator insofar as reputation affects peoples' and companies' profitability.<sup>507</sup>

Contractor behaviour is highly (although not *solely* or necessarily even *primarily*) influenced by financial reward.<sup>508</sup> At each level of decision-making authority, the loss of a client base, a contract, or one's personal job is a looming, omnipresent consequence for failing to adhere to prescribed social or ethical norms. Within militaries, it is possible to

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<sup>501</sup> Although focused code #17 is most useful for understanding the magnitude of leadership's impact on ethical behaviour, it also helps to explain factors that help leaders to understand and fulfil their personal roles. 11 participants saw written policies, in-and-of-themselves, as relatively inconsequential. While the absence of a policy might signal negligence, the mere presence of a policy guaranteed nothing. Participants placed great importance, however, on the amount of attention that corporate leaders gave to their policies and the degree to which policy adherence was enforced.

<sup>502</sup> (Theme #10: focused code #35: 8 sources; 19 references)

<sup>503</sup> (Theme #10: focused code #41: 4 sources; 8 references)

<sup>504</sup> (Theme #10: focused code #104: 3 sources; 12 references)

<sup>505</sup> (Theme #10: focused code #99: 17 sources; 53 references); data from Chapter Four pertaining to contractors' motivations suggests that paying very high salaries appears to actually worsen contractor performance by eroding contractor loyalty to the private security industry as a whole.

<sup>506</sup> (Theme #7: comprised of focused codes #37, 115, and 116)

<sup>507</sup> (Theme #8: focused code #52: 11 sources; 20 references)

<sup>508</sup> (Theme #7: focused codes #115 and 116)

enforce behaviour through an array of coercive techniques.<sup>509</sup> PSCs, however, lack martial legal codes and must therefore rely on alternate accountability mechanisms. Unlike members of many militaries, PSC leaders can ‘sack’ contractors in hostile environments with little or no warning. Under many circumstances, controlling the behaviour of contractors appears to be easier than controlling the behaviour of military personnel precisely because of the coercive effect of ‘sacking.’ At the (macro) client-level, it is possible that controlling the behaviour of PSCs could be easier than controlling the behaviour of militaries precisely because of the coercive effect of revoking or withholding contracts. Profit is an important priority for client and PSC leaders alike and profit is dependent on reputation.<sup>510</sup> Clients value their reputations and will readily disown PSCs for unacceptable behaviour.<sup>511</sup> When accountability systems incorporate historical performances into hiring and contract awarding processes, reputation becomes a powerful motivator. Adherence to the ethical norms expected by clients becomes the only long-term, viable business model.<sup>512</sup> Ethos ceases to be a PR line and becomes a business imperative.

With greater power (including the power to eliminate people from an organization or even, in some cases, an entire industry) seems to come greater responsibility. Fairly disciplining contractors is an ethical challenge for PSC leaders.<sup>513</sup> Leaders who are empowered to hold others accountable for their behaviour must be cognoscente of the relationship between fairness, morale, and ethical behaviour. A lack of awareness of this relationship can cause accountability systems to backfire. Disciplinary actions can encourage rather than discourage unethical behaviour (in the long-run) if they detract from a PSC’s ethical climate.

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<sup>509</sup> The US military’s Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), for example, empowers leaders to take punitive action to enforce orders and discipline. Coercive power stems from actions such as revoking pay, administering extra duty, or temporarily revoking privileges (US Government, 2012, *Chapter 4*). British military law codified in the Armed Forces Act grants coercive power to its leaders by allowing for very similar punitive actions (UK Ministry of Defence, 2006, 2011a).

<sup>510</sup> (Theme #8: comprised of focused codes #51 – 55)

<sup>511</sup> (Theme #8: focused code #55: 8 sources; 21 references)

<sup>512</sup> (Theme #8: focused code #53: 11 sources; 17 references)

<sup>513</sup> (Theme #7: focused code #37: 6 sources; 7 references)

Summary of Typical Positions, Roles, and Power <sup>514</sup>		
Position	Unique Role(s)	Reward / Coercive Power
All Leaders	Receive directions regarding acceptable ethical behaviour; communicate ethical and behavioural standards to subordinate leaders; maintain systems that empower subordinates to enforce standards	Variable
Client	Ensure ethical standards are specified in contracts and enforceable through agreed-upon mechanisms	Select vendors and authorize payments
NGOs, 'Watchdogs' & Media	Generally, NGOs and watchdog organizations work to identify unethical behaviour; media organizations subsequently work to publicize it.	Affect stakeholder perceptions through public communication
Training & Accrediting Authorities	Create formal and informal operational standards; provide many contractors with their first impressions of the private security industry	Award operating licenses and recommend contractors to PSCs according to their abilities to adhere to standards
Corporate	Create formal and informal policies that frame all behaviour within PSCs	Hire and fire PSC leaders according to their abilities to adhere to standards
Regional	Evaluate corporate policies according to the circumstances in specific regions	Report misconduct to higher levels of authority
Project	Interpret policies and translates policies into enforceable behavioural standards	Hire and fire contractors according to their abilities to adhere to standards
Team	Identify and interrupt unethical behaviours as they occur; TLs are often the most immediate, physically-present supervisors in hostile environments	Report misconduct to higher levels of authority

### (3) Personal Motivations to Fulfil Responsibilities Inherent to Roles

The third factor driving the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel involves the extent to which PSC leaders and contractors are personally motivated to fulfil the responsibilities inherent to their roles. Leaders who understand security in a commercial context and the role that leaders are meant to play in establishing an ethical climate can be classified as “able” to impact on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. “*Able*,” however, was found to be a separate metric from “*willing*.”<sup>515</sup> Many cultural, environmental, and institutional pressures can degrade a leader’s willingness to fulfil the responsibilities inherent to his role. The data presented in Chapter Four, comprising Themes #11 and 12, indicates that senior leaders must

<sup>514</sup> All PSCs do not have the same table of organization or hierarchical structures. This research uses a typical PSC hierarchy to illustrate that some roles are inherent to all leaders and that some roles are inherent to particular leaders at specific levels of decision-making authority. This research defines power as the capacity to influence or affect changes in the psychological state of others (French & Raven, 1959, 1968, p. 260; Northouse, 2012, p. 238). “Reward” and “coercive power” are two specific types of positional power that give leaders the capacity to influence others through positive or negative reinforcement, respectively (French, 1956, pp. 183–184; French & Raven, 1959, 1968, p. 262).

<sup>515</sup> The terms “able” and “willing” are borrowed from Hersey et al.’s (1979) Situational Leadership theory.

take actions and leverage their skills to mitigate pressures that encourage junior leaders and contractors to conform to competing, unethical, sets of norms.

The social and ethical norms that pertain to PSC personnel in hostile environments are based on International Humanitarian Laws (IHLs) outlined by the UN and the Geneva Convention. Principles outlined in the ICoC encompass the social and ethical norms incorporated into IHLs and it appears that many of the self-prescribed standards and codes implemented by corporate-level PSC leaders are designed to help ensure that PSC members behave in accordance with the ICoC. As discussed in Chapter Two: *Review of Literature*, this thesis defines ethical behaviour as “adhering to rules, standards, codes, or principles that provide guidelines for morally right behaviour and integrity in specific situations.”<sup>516</sup> In short, this thesis assumes that PSC members are behaving ‘ethically’ when their behaviour conforms to both the letter and the spirit of the principles supported by the ICoC. Data presented in Chapter Four indicated that, in hostile environments, an array of cultural, environmental, and institutional pressures can negatively affect the motivations of contractors to adhere to the social and ethical norms prescribed to the industry.<sup>517</sup> Such pressures are problematic and they make many of the principles of the ICoC more difficult to achieve. This section presents a detailed description of those pressures.

Cultural pressures that can negatively influence leaders’ and contractors’ ethical behaviour stem primarily from cultural carry-over related to former roles in militaries. Nearly all private security contractors have military training and experience. A large majority of Western contractors were in teeth-arms (combat arms) units that arguably encourage aggressive postures and offensive (as opposed to defensive) behaviours.<sup>518</sup> One participant describes the aggressive nature of teeth-arms soldiers:

I’ve worked very closely with the Para regiments and the Marines and the [Special Forces] world. They were the guys that would take the ground. And, of course, they are thinking soldiers but by their nature they are aggressive soldiers; they are attacking soldiers... And the nature of the beast that joined private security tended to be slightly on the more aggressive side of the business.<sup>519</sup>

Regardless of their background, some ex-soldiers ‘reinvent’ themselves as more-aggressive people upon leaving the military because they believe that aggressive behaviour is an

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<sup>516</sup> (Lewis, 1985)

<sup>517</sup> (Theme #11: comprised of focused codes #7, 32,36, 39, 40, 98, 100, 101 – 103, 120, 122, 123, 127, and 128)

<sup>518</sup> (Theme #11: focused code #32: 11 sources; 29 references)

<sup>519</sup> (Interview #12)

acceptable (or even desirable) norm within the private security industry.<sup>520</sup> People who ‘reinvented’ themselves were discussed by participants in negative tones, exemplified in the following quote:

You might have a few rotten apples in your team...People in the army...from all nationalities...they reinvent themselves. People reinvent themselves and kind of get above their stations a bit.<sup>521</sup>

The quote above notes that ‘reinvention’ normally includes efforts to present one’s self above their actual training, experience, or abilities. A second quote further demonstrates the motivations underlying some contractors’ efforts to reinvent themselves:

[Q]uite a lot of the guys would also falsely reinvent themselves upon arrival to a contract... guys [without SF training] would...say that they had been members of the SF community...especially if they wanted to get into our teams.<sup>522</sup>

‘Reinvention’ was seen as unnecessary and counterproductive; and often characterized by new personnel wanting to be seen as ‘battle-hardened’ or ‘combat-ready.’ However, abrasive leadership styles or communication techniques that might elicit results in the military can negatively affect morale and performance within PSCs.<sup>523</sup> The following quote suggests that military-style leadership can contribute to a higher employee turnover:

The level of [middle] management is awful within [PSCs] because they’re recruited from the military...Without any management experience when it comes to motivating or any human resources experience in motivating the lower levels of staff outside of what they learned in the military...You can’t transform military measurements directly into civilian industry and expect it to work.<sup>524</sup>

Some of the social and ethical norms inherent to the military directly compete with the norms prescribed by PSCs. While militaries can afford to research, develop, and deploy highly functional equipment designed for long-term use, the commercial goals of PSCs limit them to purchasing low cost, legally-obtainable<sup>525</sup> equipment that will depreciate within the time

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<sup>520</sup> (Theme #11: focused code #122: 6 sources; 6 references)

<sup>521</sup> (Interview #13)

<sup>522</sup> (Interview #21)

<sup>523</sup> (Theme #11: focused code #98: 20 sources; 99 references)

<sup>524</sup> (Interview #1)

<sup>525</sup> (Theme #11: focused code #39: 5 sources; 8 references)

frame of the contract. One participant's quote demonstrates how the objectives of commercial companies could lead to different decisions and behaviours:

Which is why, again, sometimes the military, to win a war or achieve an objective can spend more money. [Military] can waste. If you have to have an F-16 on the apron with its engines on ready to go, a commercial operation says 'Stop! Stop burning that fuel!' A government may wish to or may have to, to achieve that kind of objective. But that doesn't translate very well over to the security operation. Which necessarily is more economic; it has to be. And the whole mechanism: command, logistics...; they don't compare. You know, a military vehicle, [has a] high cost of development, maintenance, even [though it is just for] basic transportation... This truck is from Oshkosh; it's got to be able to... I can't tell you... it's got to be able to fly to the moon, [and] to last for 30 years. Whereas this Toyota Landcruiser B6 employed by a security company is written off over the lifetime of the project.<sup>526</sup>

Lacking the legal authority and resources of militaries, PSC personnel must rely more heavily on collaboration (especially with LNs) and referent power. The commercial context in which PSCs operate prohibits PSCs from over-resourcing. One participant explained:

An army is geared to cope with anything that is thrown at it. So it is over-resourced. It has to be... Private security companies are given a contract, a statement of work, and a series of deliverables. It will put in the minimum number of resources necessary to deliver that to the letter of the contract and no more. Otherwise [it] won't get the work.<sup>527</sup>

As commercial entities, PSC personnel are subject to civilian and commercial laws rather than military codes of justice. PSC leaders therefore have no legal authority and their coercive and reward powers are generally restricted to monetary levers. Referent power seems to be the preferred alternative.<sup>528</sup> Referent power is exhibited when "the target of influence [complies] because of a sense of identification with the influencing agent, or a desire for such identification. The influencing agent then serves as a model by which the target evaluates his or her behaviour and beliefs."<sup>529</sup>

Institutional pressures within the PSC industry itself can negatively influence contractors' ethical behaviour by generating dissatisfaction. Formal or informal company

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<sup>526</sup> (Interview #10)

<sup>527</sup> (Interview #17)

<sup>528</sup> Although focused codes #48, 69, and 80 are most useful for identifying influential leadership behaviours and the magnitude of their influence, these codes also suggest that leadership behaviours that build relationships illicit the highest levels of compliance from subordinates.

<sup>529</sup> (Raven, 1993, p. 233)

policies that allow nepotism or unfair hiring and promotion practices detract from contractor morale.<sup>530</sup> While nepotism was not reported to be a major problem within most of the private security industry, nepotism appears to be very destructive to morale in those places where it is observed. Nepotism allows informal flows of communication to be set up that bypass key leaders. It is not necessarily bad when people with problems bypass normal flows of communication if they are concerned that they will not get good results from their immediate supervisors. However, this incident-specific behaviour is different from the permanent background channels created by nepotism. Problems from nepotism most often negatively impact the middle management level but they can cause damage at every level by eroding feelings of teamwork.

Furthermore, many contractors feel themselves to be expendable assets;<sup>531</sup> and many contractors feel their PSCs ask them for more loyalty than they are willing to give in return.<sup>532</sup> High job availability and very high pay exacerbates disloyalty amongst contractors by making it easy for contractors to move between companies; or to work for a very short amount of time and then quit.<sup>533</sup> This thesis suggests that exorbitant levels of remuneration have a negative impact on ethical behaviour; however, not for the cost-efficiency reasons put forward by some political theorists.<sup>534</sup> Very high pay (especially when coupled with high job availability) decreases loyalty and diminishes long-term career intentions; two institutional pressures that affect PSC personnel's personal motivations to fulfil the responsibilities inherent to their roles.<sup>535</sup> This thesis's findings appear to support Bryson et al., who state that worker performances improve when workers are motivated by long-term career ambitions. Workers appear to exert additional effort and take advantage of off-the-job training when they view their job as a professional, full-time occupation.<sup>536</sup> While very high pay appears to

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<sup>530</sup> (Theme #12: focused codes #73 and 77)

<sup>531</sup> (Theme #11: focused code #120: 7 sources; 16 references)

<sup>532</sup> Although focused code #75 is most useful for identifying the leadership behaviours that affect the drivers of ethical behaviour, it also helps to explain factors that affect contractors' personal motivations to uphold responsibilities inherent to their roles.

<sup>533</sup> (Theme #12: focused code #117: 10 sources; 21 references); contractors who intend to quit in a short period of time do not have the same incentives to improve their skill sets or perform as well as contractors with long-term career intentions

<sup>534</sup> Patterson (2014, pp. 84–87) outlines several major arguments for and against the cost-efficiency of PSCs. Krahmann (2010, p. 216) asserts that cost-savings inherent to PSC hire may represent a “false economy” because state governments have already paid for the training of ex-military PSC personnel. Brooks and Streng (2012, p. 308) assert that PSCs provide a readily-available pool of skilled security professionals that states only have to pay when contingency operations arise.

<sup>535</sup> See Table: “Summary of Influences on the Motivations of PSC Personnel”

<sup>536</sup> (Bryson, Buraimo, & Simmons, 2011, p. 424); this finding potentially increases the importance of focused code #123: “Stable contracts and progressive careers are desired but difficult to achieve” (5 sources; 7 references)



diminish contractors' incentives to behave ethically, it does not follow that commercial security providers are *inherently* unethical. Additional research is necessary to determine the extent to which (lower) remuneration might affect costs to clients, resource 'trade-offs,' and 'quality' as a measure of military effectiveness.

Low morale and low levels of loyalty detract from contractors' willingness to identify themselves as security professionals with long-term interests in the future of the private security industry.<sup>537</sup> The behaviour of large numbers of contractors with low morale and loyalty can coalesce to create normative systems that compete with those norms conducive to ethical behaviour within PSCs.

Finally, there are environmental pressures that can negatively influence contractors' ethical behaviour. Environmental pressures stem primarily from corrupt local customs and cultures in the hostile environments where PSCs operate;<sup>538</sup> these pressures are further exacerbated by the commercial context in which PSCs operate.<sup>539</sup> Many LN governments in hostile environments have blatantly unfair commercial practices that encourage bribery and fraud. Often, behavioural control mechanisms such as inventory procurement, inspections, licensing procedures, and even visa processes can be circumvented through informal payments. LN government officials can often gain leverage over PSCs by demanding such payments and disallowing PSC operations until informal payments are made. Competing PSCs can often gain short-term commercial advantages over each other by paying their way around regulations and controls. The following quote illustrate some PSCs' willingness to use corruption to their advantage:

People are doing it to get ahead of you to such a point where companies start going: "Hey, they're getting all of this sorted. This Western company is really good and high but what we really need is to get our business done and this [other] company can get visas and it can get vehicles and it's not as expensive either. We just need to see this one nice man every day who sorts all our problems out." It turns out that nice man is related to everyone in government and it's all what we would see as very corrupt: a "fixer;" a "Facilitator" who is getting kick-backs and fine [things].<sup>540</sup>

Another participant explained how easy paying government inspectors could be and the effects that corruption could have on the morale of people who were trying to behave according to international (as opposed to local) norms and rules:

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<sup>537</sup> (Theme #11: focused code #101: 12 sources; 36 references)

<sup>538</sup> (Theme #11: focused code #100: 13 sources; 35 references)

<sup>539</sup> (Theme #11: focused code #103: 7 sources; 14 references)

<sup>540</sup> (Interview #4)

[Some LN inspectors] said... ‘We need to go to another company on the way in... it’d be just two minutes.’ The guy walked out of the [other] office, shook their hand, gave them an envelope and there was \$5,000 in there. And that was their license granted. It was frustrating and you think about what a length of time it took us to prepare for [our inspection]. Weeks and weeks of work and it wasn’t appreciated by the [LN government].<sup>541</sup>

Leaders that are immersed in this environment for months or even years are at greater risk for behaving unethically, especially when those pressures become institutionalized to the point that they become a competing set of ‘norms.’ The following quote explains how participating in corruption can be seen as a rational decision when it is encouraged in the environment.

When you are on the field of play, it is [ok to do certain things that would not be permissible in other environments]; and it’s encouraged; it’s normal and it’s standard; and if you don’t do it to him, he’s going to do that to you...there is an element of that when you are in [the host nation] or other countries around the world where it is so commonplace that everyone is doing it.<sup>542</sup>

The commercial imperative of PSCs can, to some degree, legitimize decisions to conduct businesses in accordance with corrupt or unethical LN business practices. Client pressures to meet deadlines and certain service standards can leave PSC leaders with few options beyond either behaving unethically or forfeiting commercial opportunities.<sup>543</sup> When clients value speed and cost savings over adherence to ethical business practices, then the commercial context becomes a source of negative pressure.

The remainder of this section discusses factors that were determined to mitigate the aforementioned cultural, institutional, and environmental pressures to behave unethically. Overcoming pressures that negatively affect contractors’ personal motivations requires deliberate effort. Using the findings presented in Chapter Four, the following paragraphs will first discuss solutions for mitigating negative cultural and institutional pressures; followed by solutions for mitigating negative environmental pressures.

Mitigating negative cultural and institutional pressures is foremost a function of corporate leaders implementing policies that encourage the recruitment of people who are

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<sup>541</sup> (Interview #14)

<sup>542</sup> (Interview #4); Prince (2014, 14:35) further notes that PSCs operate in environments characterized by “not just organized crime, but *industrialized* crime.”

<sup>543</sup> (Theme #11: focused code #102: 10 sources; 14 references)

willing and able to adhere to prescribed social and ethical norms.<sup>544</sup> Two participant statements point to corporate leaders' policy decisions that impact on recruiting. The first quote suggests that leaders are unequivocally responsible for sound policies:

It is the responsibility of the executive officers: the calibre of the guys coming into the place. You cannot delegate responsibility. The boss is ultimately responsible [for the people who are recruited].<sup>545</sup>

A second quote suggests that policy changes do affect the types of people who are allowed into the industry:

I think now, and certainly in my latter time of doing it (I was done with PSDs in 2009), you are recruiting a different sort of person than what you were in 2003 or 2006. I think there's a different sort of person [now available]. To start with, [the industry] was very mercenary: you get in, great money, nobody cared, it was military but a bit freelance; it was doing what you couldn't do in the army because there were [fewer] controls on the whole thing. And you have to blame some of the leadership in there as well; they went along with the fact. But now, there is much greater control involved.<sup>546</sup>

Another participant used the infamous case of Danny Fitzsimons to illustrate the negative effects of poor corporate recruiting policies and a lack of a robust vetting system:

...The guy who went crazy at [a PSC]; he'd been sacked from [another company]...He was volatile. He shouldn't have been employed by [the other company] as it turns out but he got through the system. But, after that...every other company was sent an email by [the company that sacked him] warning them of this guy saying 'do not employ him; he's got serious issues.' ...[the PSC] chose to ignore the warnings, hired him, and look what happened.<sup>547</sup>

Participants suggested that people who have not been over-indoctrinated into military culture (having 'fewer years of service'), lack pensions, have families, have personally invested in their own training, and have strong sense of teamwork are most willing to adhere to industry

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<sup>544</sup> (Theme #12: focused code #117: 10 sources; 21 references) This focused code revealed that contractors with long-term career goals are incentivised to adhere to prescribed social and ethical norms. Additionally, Theme #12: focused code #73 and 77 suggest that contractors should be hired and/or promoted based on their abilities and willingness to adhere to social and ethical norms (rather than fraternity or nepotism). Although focused codes #10, 71, 74, and 83 are more useful for describing leadership skills and behaviours that affect drivers of ethical behaviour, they also suggest that recruiting and retention policies are to some degree important.

<sup>545</sup> (Interview #1)

<sup>546</sup> (Interview #12)

<sup>547</sup> (Interview #13)

norms.<sup>548</sup> Under most circumstances, motivations and loyalties stemming from contractors' personal, financial, and family situations appear to be strong enough to overcome negative pressures stemming from military experiences or media (mis)representations. Once a strong core of contractors is achieved, PSC leaders at all levels must implement and enforce policies that lead to the retention of ethical personnel. Policies that support contractor morale by facilitating fairness (meritocracy) and loyalty (career progression) encourage contractors to identify themselves with their PSCs' missions and adhere to prescribed norms.<sup>549</sup>

Mitigating environmental pressures is foremost a function of corporate leaders implementing policies that require multiple leaders to scrutinize cash flows.<sup>550</sup> Financial responsibilities must be shared in such a way that financial decisions are transparent and diffused amongst multiple observers. Diffusing responsibility makes collusion difficult and leverages teamwork and communication as effective countermeasures for corruption. Evidence further suggests that money should be held at the highest levels of decision-making authority that operational requirements allow.<sup>551</sup> Although there may be times when PSC leaders must sacrifice short-term gains to remain in compliance with ethical norms, these sacrifices can result in long-term advantage. As described in the following quote, some business opportunities have hidden risks that can make short-term gains unadvisable:

You'll often find lucrative contracts but the first question you must ask is, 'Why is this so lucrative?' It's the old 'too good to be true' argument. These people are often not able to get the services they want; there's a reason for that so you need to be very careful. Sometimes there're conflicts where we refuse to bid on work due to reputational risk ...on what might otherwise be a good piece of business. We would do it also on the perception of a conflict [of interest] where no conflict exists.<sup>552</sup>

Stakeholders' perceptions of a PSC's willingness to adhere to ethical norms are important; commitment must be demonstrated and communicated. Expending resources to adhere to

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<sup>548</sup> (Theme #12: focused code #117: 10 sources; 21 references)

<sup>549</sup> (Theme #12: focused codes #17 and 77)

<sup>550</sup> Although focused code #66 is more useful for assessing the magnitude of leadership's impact on ethical behaviours, it also suggests the importance of auditing as a mitigating leader behaviour.

<sup>551</sup> Although focused code #50 is more useful for assessing the magnitude of leadership's impact on ethical behaviours, it also indicates that many negative environmental pressures can be mitigated by limiting the decision-making power of people who are in hostile environments.

<sup>552</sup> (Interview #17)

ethical norms sends a strong message to a stable (and lucrative) client base, as well as to subordinate leaders who look to their superiors for examples.<sup>553</sup> One participant explained:

...all of this costs [money]. So if you are to take a purely commercial view, then it would be great to get away with not doing it because [theoretically] we'd make more profit. But actually, when you look at the industry maturing, then you understand the reason for it and it absolutely makes sense. And we as a business have little option to comply, because if we didn't, we wouldn't win business. Clients would look at us and say '...You're not playing by the rules. You haven't signed up to...any of these other policies that are regulating the industry; so why haven't you? Is it because you are afraid of it or you don't meet the standards?'<sup>554</sup>

Environmental pressures stemming from commercial and client pressures can be further mitigated by ensuring that PSCs and clients share legal, financial, and reputational risks associated with ethical decision-making processes. Clients, for example, may form a part of a PSC's logistics chain; or clients might be contractually required to give written consent for certain policies and actions. It is arguable that commercial and government clients have different ethical standards. Thus, different PSCs can exhibit different behaviour and still be considered to be behaving "ethically;" or "unethically," depending on stakeholders' interpretations of International Human Rights laws or the ICoC. Clients (commercial and government) and media organizations all play a role in interpreting which behaviour is within normative boundaries. Prince (2014) suggests that the US State Dept. had no ethical qualms when it issued his PSC (Blackwater International) heavy weapons while simultaneously preventing his PSC from video recording activities to ensure accountability.<sup>555</sup> Additionally, many assets owned by Prince's PSC to facilitate government contracts were uninsurable. Prince suggests that failing to share financial and reputational risks with his primary client, the US government, contributed heavily to Blackwater's demise.<sup>556</sup> PSC leaders must not "let [themselves] get whipped by a clueless customer who pulls [them] into doing things [they] shouldn't."<sup>557</sup>

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<sup>553</sup> Although focused code #64 is more useful for assessing the magnitude of leadership's impact on ethical behaviours, it also helps describe the importance of properly resourcing activities, such that they can be performed in an ethical manner.

<sup>554</sup> (Interview #9)

<sup>555</sup> (Prince, 2014, 29:00)

<sup>556</sup> This statement supports focused code #113, which indicated that sharing legal and financial risks with clients can curb clients' abilities to pressure PSC personnel to behave unethically.

<sup>557</sup> (Prince, 2014, 27:45); Prince states that, rather than allowing himself or his company to be "whipped," he should have ceased providing services to the client by issuing a "labour stop order" until a system for transparency and accountability could be achieved.

Summary of Influences on the Motivations of PSC Personnel		
Type of Influence	Negative (Detracting) Influences	Positive (Mitigating) Influences
Cultural	Militant behaviour carried over from military	Policies that lead to the recruitment and retention of internally motivated and loyal personnel
	Misinterpretations of PSC norms derived from media representations of private security industry	
Institutional	Nepotism and unfair personnel management practices	
	Policies and systems that detract from morale, loyalty, and long-term career intentions	
Environmental	Corrupt business practices encouraged by LN governments in hostile environments	Diffusing financial authority amongst multiple people at the most supervisable (highest) levels of decision-making authority.
	Commercial pressures from clients and market competition	Sharing ethically-based legal, financial, and reputational risks with clients

Thus far, this chapter has discussed 12 of the 17 themes presented in Chapter Four which indicate that the ethical behaviour of contractors is driven by three major factors:

- 1) PSC personnel's understandings of security in the commercial context
- 2) Leaders' understandings of their personal roles in establishing an organization-wide ethical climate
- 3) PSC personnel's personal motivations to fulfil the responsibilities inherent to their roles.

Understanding security in a commercial context prepares PSC leaders to leave behind the social and ethical norms accepted by the military and to adopt those prescribed to the private security industry. Understanding one's personal role in establishing an organization-wide ethical climate informs a PSC leader of the unique contributions that he is expected to make to his organization's collective leadership efforts. And, finally, feeling personally motivated to fulfil the responsibilities inherent to one's role ensures that a PSC leader will be able to overcome an array of cultural, environmental, and institutional pressures to behave unethically.

The next sections will discuss the remaining five themes to explain how leadership can affect the aforementioned drivers of ethical behaviour and the magnitude of the leadership's affects on those drivers.

## Leadership Skills and Behaviours that Affect the Drivers of Ethical Behaviour

Two of the themes generated from the data presented in Chapter Four indicated that there are specific skills and behaviours that affect the drivers of ethical behaviour.<sup>558</sup> As noted in the literature review, this thesis defines a leadership “skill” as a leadership “attribute or capability learned or acquired after birth.”<sup>559</sup> This thesis defines leadership “behaviour” as the “repetitious actions of leaders towards subordinates in various contexts.”<sup>560</sup>

Four specific leadership skills were found to be particularly influential on the drivers of ethical behaviour. The first skill was ‘culturally aware’ personnel management. Soft social skills related to cultural awareness and technical skills related to managing cultural differences were found to directly impact on the first driver of ethical behaviour: PSC personnel’s understandings of security provision in a commercial context.<sup>561</sup> Cultural awareness and management skills enable contractors to develop the close, functional relationships that PSCs must have with LN populations. Cultural awareness and management skills also enable contractors to solve security problems without feeling compelled to rely on (often non-existent) firepower and material support. When leaders at all levels of decision-making authority demonstrate and emphasize ‘culturally aware’ personnel management skills, subordinates can better-distinguish differences between commercial and military security provision.

The second skill was ‘policy writing and implementation.’ Particularly at higher levels of decision-making authority, policy writing and implementation skills directly impact on the second driver of ethical behaviour: leaders’ understandings of their personal roles in establishing an ethical climate.<sup>562</sup> Policy writing and implementation skills enable leaders to establish ethical frames of reference for subordinates, which is particularly important when national or international regulations are unclear or when environmental factors create

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<sup>558</sup> (Themes #13 and 14)

<sup>559</sup> Evolved from trait theory is skills theory, which advocates that the attributes leaders must have to be successful are not innate but are instead learnable through training and experience (Katz, 1955; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; M. D. Mumford, Marks, Connelly, Zaccaro, & Reiter-Palmon, 2000; M. D. Mumford, Zaccaro, Connelly, et al., 2000; M. D. Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, et al., 2000; T. V. Mumford, Campion, & Morgeson, 2007; Zaccaro, Mumford, Connelly, Marks, & Gilbert, 2000). Mumford and his colleagues led multiple studies concluding that certain critical skills are developed at certain phases in a leader’s growth path. Developments normally transpire according to a leader’s position and responsibilities within organizational structures. Skills theory asserts that leadership is “the capabilities, knowledge, and skills that make effective leadership possible” (M. D. Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, et al., 2000, p. 12). That leadership can be learned and developed as a skill set is a central pillar of all leadership training programs, including those of the British military.

<sup>560</sup> This definition is from Northouse (2010, p. 69), who discusses leadership from a ‘style’ perspective.

<sup>561</sup> (Theme #13: focused codes #24, 33, 34, 129, and 130)

<sup>562</sup> (Theme #13: focused codes #83 and 108)

competing sets of ethical norms. When leaders at all levels of decision-making authority skilfully write and implement policies, PSC personnel can better-understand the ethical boundaries that they are expected to operate within.

The third skill was ‘empathetic’ personnel management. Using empathy to help select fair and effective disciplinary techniques was found to directly impact on the third driver of ethical behaviour: PSC personnel’s personal motivations to fulfil the responsibilities inherent to their roles.<sup>563</sup> Personnel management skills that facilitate the fair treatment and welfare of contractors (including LN contractors) are particularly influential because of the strong effect that morale has on contractors’ motivations. When leaders at all levels of decision-making authority make disciplinary decisions with a modicum of empathy (including those related to leave rotations and retention policies), then subordinates are more likely to develop feelings of loyalty and obligations to behave according to prescribed norms.

The fourth and final skill was ‘client management’ with an emphasis on clearly communicating with clients to manage their expectations. Clear communication helped to manage clients’ expectations, which appeared to mitigate some client- and commercially-driven top-down pressures to behave unethically.<sup>564</sup> When leaders at all levels of decision-making authority maintain open and clear communication with their clients, then PSC personnel can better-adhere to prescribed ethical norms. Communicating clearly can, for example, include writing tightly-drawn contracts that make clients and contractors equally accountable for unethical behaviour; it also includes daily discussions that reinforce performance standards.

The following chart summarizes specific skills that affect the drivers of ethical behaviour. The primary effect of these skills is that they help leaders to establish and maintain an organization-wide ethical climate. Other skills may also have a significant impact; however, the dataset used for this thesis limits its support to only the skills shown below.

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<sup>563</sup> (Theme #13: focused codes #93 and 107)

<sup>564</sup> (Theme #13: focused code #114) Clear communication skills were also found to directly impact on the third driver of ethical behaviour: PSC personnel’s personal motivations to fulfil their roles.



Summary of Influential Leadership Skills					
Skills	Effects	Drivers Affected	# of sources	# of refs	Focused Codes
(S1) Personnel Management: Using cultural awareness to help manage cultural differences and communicate with the predominant cultures of hostile environments	Facilitates cooperation with LNs who can inform on local terrain, people, infrastructure and business opportunities	(1) Understanding security in a commercial context	16	85	#24, 33, 34, 129, 130
(S2) Policy Writing and Implementation: Using military leadership experience to help create and enforce organization-wide behaviour management systems	Provides contractors with a frame of reference that they can use when national and international laws are unclear	(2) Understanding personal roles in establishing ethical climates	16	31	#83, 108
(S3) Personnel Management: Empathetically selecting fair and effective disciplinary techniques	Facilitates fair systems for personnel evaluation and retention	(3) Personal motivations to fulfil role	6	12	#93, 107
(S4) Client Management: Using clear communication skills to manage client expectations and mitigate conflicting interests	Mitigates the possibility of clients pressuring PSCs to behave unethically	(3) Personal motivations to fulfil role	3	4	#114

Seven specific leadership behaviours were found to also affect the drivers of ethical behaviour; particularly regarding contractors' understandings of their personal roles in establishing ethical climates. These finding suggests that contractors develop an understanding of what is expected of them more through the behaviour exhibited by leaders than through other forms of conveyance. This section on influential leadership behaviour is complimentary to the following section, which discusses how leadership behaviours have more impact on ethical climates than written rules or regulations.

The first leadership behaviour was 'communicating openly and honestly.' Communicating openly and honestly was found to impact on the second driver of ethical behaviour: leaders' understandings of their personal roles in establishing ethical climates. Open communication ensured that subordinates were aware of their roles; misunderstandings and concerns could be addressed more-readily and without barriers.<sup>565</sup> Honest communication helped to overcome any distrust that subordinates might have had of their senior leadership's willingness to care for their health and welfare.<sup>566</sup> Finally, a prerequisite

<sup>565</sup> (Theme #14: focused code #90: 11 sources; 19 references)

<sup>566</sup> (Theme #14: focused code #94: 17 sources; 37 references)

for honest communication is that leaders must prioritize the accuracy of information during decision-making processes.<sup>567</sup> By rigorously assessing information for accuracy, leaders at all levels of decision-making authority can help to ensure that the ethical consequences of decisions are clear and they can exemplify the importance of honest reporting to subordinates.

The second leadership behaviour was ‘emphasizing teamwork when solving problems.’ Leadership behaviours that emphasize cooperation, collaboration, and teamwork directly impact on the second driver of ethical behaviour: PSC personnel’s understandings of their personal roles in establishing ethical climates.<sup>568</sup> Inclusive behaviours, particularly those that include LNs, facilitate cohesion and create a shared sense of identity amongst team members.<sup>569</sup> As a result, PSC personnel remain cognizant of larger social contexts and they can consider a wider range of stakeholders as they carry out their responsibilities.<sup>570</sup> PSC personnel might also feel more valued knowing that they are an integral part of an organization, which leads to increased loyalty and a desire to conform to prescribed social and ethical norms.<sup>571</sup>

The third leadership behaviour involved ‘training personnel.’ Training conducted within PSCs again directly impacts on the second driver of ethical behaviour.<sup>572</sup> In particular, ethical training conducted for regional and project-level leaders at PSC corporate offices and Code of Conduct training at project and team level helped to communicate ethical standards to contractors. Although most contractors (especially LNs) were reportedly unable to understand Codes of Conduct in their entirety, the effort put forth by senior leaders demonstrated to subordinates that ethical conduct is a serious issue. Other forms of training, including physical fitness training and tactical training, facilitated teamwork and reinforced top-down hierarchies.

The fourth leadership behaviour was ‘exercising a duty of care over contractors.’ Particularly lower down in company hierarchies, PSC personnel’s loyalty-levels and degrees of respect for their companies’ norms appear to be heavily affected by the loyalty and respect that they perceive coming from their leadership.<sup>573</sup> By exhibiting concern for others, leaders at all levels of decision-making authority can cultivate internal motivations amongst their subordinates, which encourages them to adhere to prescribed sets of social and ethical norms.

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<sup>567</sup> (Theme #14: focused code #95: 11 sources; 37 references)

<sup>568</sup> (Theme #14: focused codes #15, 20, and 89)

<sup>569</sup> (Theme #14: focused codes #69 and 131)

<sup>570</sup> (Theme #14: focused codes #80: 4 sources; 4 references)

<sup>571</sup> (Theme #14: focused code #111: 5 sources; 10 references)

<sup>572</sup> (Theme #14: focused codes #6, 18, 25, and 78)

<sup>573</sup> (Theme #14: focused codes #75 and 109)

The fifth leadership behaviour involved ‘vetting affiliated personnel.’ Rigorously assessing clients, contractors, and affiliates appeared to directly impact on the first and third drivers of ethical behaviour.<sup>574</sup> When corporate leaders vet clients and establish vetting policies for hiring new contractors, minimum standards of acceptable behaviour become visible.<sup>575</sup> Stakeholders can observe the factors that cause PSCs to choose to not work with certain clients or contractors. Declinations of contract opportunities and refusing to hire contractors with unsuitable backgrounds create observable examples of the ethical boundaries that frame PSC activities. Vetting behaviours need not be limited to initial decisions to take on clients or contractors:<sup>576</sup> project-level leaders can also vet PSC personnel by regularly observing and assessing their subordinates. Periodic vetting of people already affiliated with PSCs helps to ensure that project members remain willing and able to adhere to prescribed sets of social and ethical norms. Vetting behaviours can create systems of reciprocal benefits whereby ethical contractors create ethical climates within PSCs; and ethical climates attract and retain ethical contractors.

The sixth influential leadership behaviour was ‘enforcing ethics through top-down mechanisms.’ Leadership behaviours that support top-down ethical enforcement mechanisms can directly impact on the second driver of ethical behaviour: PSC personnel’s understandings of their personal roles in establishing ethical climates.<sup>577</sup> Such behaviours include empowering subordinate leaders and holding subordinate leaders accountable for failing to use their powers appropriately in the support of ethical standards. Subordinate leaders are informed of which standards must be enforced by the willingness and abilities of senior leaders (including client leaders) to enforce specific standards. Top-down ethical enforcement mechanisms enable leaders to foster a single, organization-wide ethical climate. Disjointed ethical enforcement mechanisms, or those that allow subordinate leaders to sporadically create and enforce their own standards, can lead to confusion within organizations.<sup>578</sup> Whenever leaders fail to clearly understand their roles in establishing ethical climates, instances of non-compliance are more likely to occur amongst subordinates.

Finally, the seventh influential leadership behaviour involved ‘allocating adequate resources to missions.’ Leaders can affect the second driver of ethical behaviour by setting

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<sup>574</sup> (Theme #14: focused codes #71, 74, and 76)

<sup>575</sup> (Theme #14: focused codes #2 and 10)

<sup>576</sup> (Theme #14: focused code #13)

<sup>577</sup> (Theme #14: focused codes #110 and 113)

<sup>578</sup> (Theme #14: focused code #79: 4 sources; 12 references)

examples through resource allocation.<sup>579</sup> Resource allocation demonstrates priorities. When sufficient resources are allocated to tasks such that tasks can be conducted in an ethical manner, it becomes clear to subordinate leaders that adherence to ethical norms is expected. Conversely, a failure to allocate resources to mandatory tasks communicates to subordinate leaders that either the task is optional or adherence to ethical standards is optional. Inadequate resource allocation was cited as an issue with regards to firearms trainings, vehicle and equipment procurement, and human resource management. Additionally, PSC leaders who are properly resourced are more likely to receive and submit honest information from/to clients and senior leaders.

The following chart summarizes the specific behaviours that affect the drivers of ethical behaviour. The primary affect of these behaviours is that they help leaders to establish and maintain an organization-wide ethical climate. Other behaviours may also have a significant impact; however, the dataset used for this thesis limits its support to only the behaviours shown below.

Summary of Influential Leadership Behaviours					
Behaviours	Effects	Drivers Affected	# of sources	# of refs	Focused Codes
(B1) Communicating openly and honestly, using only rigorously assessed information	Facilitates trust and cohesion; Ensures ethical consequences of decisions are clear; promotes honest reporting	(2) Understanding personal roles in establishing ethical climates	21	91	#90, 94, 95
(B2) Emphasizing cooperation/ collaboration/ teamwork when solving problems	Facilitates teamwork & cohesion; improves loyalty by fostering a sense of identity	(2) Understanding personal roles in establishing ethical climates (3) Personal motivations to fulfil roles	20	95	#15, 20, 69, 80, 89, 111, 131
(B3) Training affiliated personnel (including both clients and contractors)	Facilitates teamwork; communicates standards	(2) Understanding personal roles in establishing ethical climates	19	101	#6, 18, 25, 78
(B4) Exercising a duty of care over contractors (ensuring health & safety; morale & welfare)	Promotes adherence to norms by improving morale & loyalty	(3) Personal motivations to fulfil roles	19	69	#21, 72, 75, 109

<sup>579</sup> (Theme #14: focused code #19: 6 sources; 13 references); Although focused code #64 is more useful for assessing the magnitude of leadership's impact on ethical behaviours, it also suggests that the way in which tasks are resourced communicates to others how tasks are intended to be executed.

(B5) Vetting affiliated personnel (including both clients and contractors)	Ensures that PSCs' affiliates are willing and able to adhere to prescribed ethical norms	(1) Understanding security in a commercial context (3) Personal motivations to fulfil roles	18	78	#2, 10, 13, 71, 74, 76
(B6) Enforcing ethics through top-down mechanisms	Ensures a single, organization-wide ethical climate	(2) Understanding personal roles in establishing ethical climates	12	35	#79, 110, 113
(B7) Allocating adequate resources to missions (meeting service standards)	Communicates standards ; promotes honest reporting	(2) Understanding personal roles in establishing ethical climates (3) Personal motivations to fulfil roles	6	13	#19

### The Magnitude of Leadership's Impact on the Drivers of Ethical Behaviour

The last three of the 17 themes generated from the data presented in Chapter Four indicated that leadership skills and behaviours have some magnitude of impact on the drivers of ethical behaviour. Because the research underlying this thesis was designed using an interpretivist theoretical framework, it was impossible for this thesis to determine the magnitude of leadership's impact in absolute (positivist) terms. However, some magnitude of impact was verifiable. Several findings, measured in subjective terms, helped to inform the central thesis question. Leaders' actions were seen to both change<sup>580</sup> and, to some extent, diminish<sup>581</sup> the ethical challenges facing contractors in hostile environments. Evidence also suggested that leaders' behaviours had more impact on the ethical behaviour of contractors than words or written rules.<sup>582</sup>

Ethical challenges facing contractors in hostile environments have changed as PSC leaders have evolved policies and practices to keep up with changes in the industry. The single greatest change that PSC leaders have had to adapt to is the nationalization of labour in two of the largest PSC markets: Iraq and Afghanistan. The drawdown of coalition forces in these regions has also caused PSC leaders to more-strongly embrace security solutions that rely on LN labour and support. Working more-closely with LNs seems to have improved Western contractors' abilities to cooperate and empathize with LN populations; market demands have incentivized behaviour that is in-line with industry standards and norms such as the Geneva Conventions and the ICoC. However, nationalization and closer working

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<sup>580</sup> (Theme #15)

<sup>581</sup> (Theme #16)

<sup>582</sup> (Theme #17)

relationships have also challenged PSC leaders to maintain high standards.<sup>583</sup> Supervision, accountability, and reporting often require more attention due to differences in some LN and Western skill levels.<sup>584</sup>

A decrease in government contracts in two of the world's major PSC markets has also caused many PSCs to streamline their business processes. Since the beginning of the coalition drawdown of troops in Iraq, many PSCs have consolidated staff and decision-making processes at corporate level. Consolidation has caused some companies to emphasize top-down decision-making in ways that better-facilitate unified, organization-wide ethical climates. However, consolidation has also caused disjoints in some PSCs chains-of-command. Decision-makers located in London head offices may be at risk of attempting to implement policies in far-away regions that they are not familiar with. Consolidating staff and decision-making processes at corporate level can also magnify problems for PSCs that do not have strong top-down-managed ethical frameworks. LN interactions and decision-consolidation thus diminish some ethical challenges while exacerbating others.<sup>585</sup>

Ethical challenges facing contractors in hostile environments have diminished as PSC leaders have evolved policies and practices to keep up with changes in the industry. Leaders from many types of organizations, including PSCs, have evolved regulatory systems during the past decade.<sup>586</sup> Improved regulation has enhanced transparency, supervision, and accountability; as a result, contractors have been encouraged to more closely adhere to prescribed ethical norms. One participant explains how evolving regulatory systems have created changes that affect corporate and regional level leaders:

...as a sector matures, it becomes more regulated. The private security industry 10 years ago was the Wild West because it was a new industry and new sector. Now, costs of sales have gone up in Iraq because, surprisingly, now health and safety is more important; regulation training is more important; the level of qualifications that our individuals hold is now more important. And, as the industry matures, the more we expect our people to hold more qualifications and that costs more. And different companies have different metrics for how they do that, whether they expect their contractors to come with those qualifications or they run courses to train up contractors... There would be no question if there was an incident [today] that it would not be fully investigated; and, if an individual transgressed or did something

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<sup>583</sup> (Theme #15: focused codes #43 and 45)

<sup>584</sup> In an interview conducted by CIMSEC, Prince (2014, 13:30) notes that accountability of equipment, people, fuel, and other assets is especially important when dealing with LNs.

<sup>585</sup> (Theme #15: focused code #50: 3 sources; 5 references)

<sup>586</sup> (Theme #16: focused code #42: 13 sources; 40 references)

that was against company policy or against the rule of law in the country, they would be dealt with.<sup>587</sup>

Another participant's quote explains how evolving regulatory systems can affect PSCs at project and team levels:

[After] the Nisour Square incident in 2007, they started to tighten up on this. CONOC was established and there were parameters and vehicle markings put in place. Once the transponders we put in everyone's vehicles, you couldn't get away with it. There was licensing and you had to have your numbers on your vehicles. Mission planning had to take place in one form or another, using mission request forms submitted 72 hours prior to movement; it had to be authorized, etc. etc. So, that kind of helped tighten things up and put some rules in place where, before, there were no rules.<sup>588</sup>

Complimentarily, PSC leaders have begun favouring contractors who have non-military training and experience (*in addition to* military training and experience), demonstrated social competencies, and long-term career perspectives.<sup>589</sup> The net effect has been the development of a contractor population that has moved away from sets of norms accepted by militaries and towards those norms prescribed by the private security industry.<sup>590</sup>

Finally, the findings of this thesis support claims that leaders' behaviours have more impact on the ethical behaviour of contractors than words or written rules. While an empirical order of magnitude cannot be calculated, the list of influential leadership behaviours was notably longer than the list of influential leadership skills.<sup>591</sup> Interview Guide Question #6, presented in Chapter Four, was instrumental in determining the ways in which outsiders or subordinate leaders might discern the importance that leaders assign to ethical behaviour. Several participants stated plainly that 'actions impact more heavily on ethical climates than policies or written rules'.<sup>592</sup> The logic behind these statements was that written policies are irrelevant if they are not enforced through action. While the presence of a policy is a good first step, it is the actions taken on account of policies that ultimately create ethical norms. The majority of the focused codes pertaining to Q6 were derived from actions and

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<sup>587</sup> (Interview #9)

<sup>588</sup> (Interview #13)

<sup>589</sup> (Theme #16: focused codes #44 and 46)

<sup>590</sup> (Theme #16: focused codes #48 and 81)

<sup>591</sup> The data gathered for this research led to the identification of 28 influential leadership behaviours; this is compared to only 10 influential leadership skills.

<sup>592</sup> (Interview #70: 11 sources; 20 references)

behaviours. The following chart shows four specific leader behaviours that were determined to have a greater impact on contractor behaviour than written rules and regulations:

Summary of Specific Behaviours that Supersede Written Rules & Regulations				
Behaviours	Effects	# of sources	# of refs	Focused Codes
Modelling behavioural standards (physical fitness; self-discipline)	Exemplifies ethical standards to clients, PSC personnel, and other stakeholders	18	66	#9, 16, 70, 121
Treating others honestly and fairly (contractor welfare)		13	44	#56, 60, 67
Discussing ethical values as priorities when laws or guidelines are unclear	Contributes to an organization-wide ethical climate	19	50	#57, 59, 61, 62
Spending resources to supervise and enforce ethical norms		15	48	#58, 63 – 66

## Summary

The sum of this thesis' findings helps to explain the extent to which leadership skills and behaviours influence the ethical behaviour of British PSC personnel in hostile environments. The data presented in Chapter Four suggests that the ethical behaviour of British PSC personnel in hostile environments is influenced by three drivers; those drivers can be, in turn, influenced by leadership skills and behaviours; and, while the magnitude of leadership's impact cannot be quantified, leadership appears to have more impact on ethical behaviour than written rules.

The first driver of ethical behaviour is contractors' understandings of security in a commercial context. Contractors' understandings of security in a commercial context are negatively affected by norms and visual imagery carried over from the military into PSCs; and by misrepresentations of the private security industry propagated by mainstream media. Contractors' understandings of security in a commercial context are positively affected by PSC leaders who clearly communicate their organizations' commercial purpose and objectives.

The second driver of ethical behaviour is contractors' understandings of their personal roles in establishing an organization-wide ethical climate. Leaders have both general influences as authority figures and varied types and degrees of specific influence based on their personal positions within their organizations' hierarchies. Contractors' understandings of their personal roles are positively affected by 'awareness' and 'empowerment.' To promote awareness, higher-level leaders must continuously inform subordinate leaders of their roles within the organizational hierarchy. To promote 'empowerment,' higher-level



leaders must ensure that functional processes are in place to allow subordinate leaders to make consequent decisions in support of company policies.

The third driver of ethical behaviour is contractors' personal motivations to fulfil the responsibilities inherent to their roles. Many cultural, environmental, and institutional pressures negatively impact on contractors' personal motivations. Negative cultural and institutional pressures can be mitigated by policies (including recruiting and retention policies) that promote fairness and loyalty amongst contractors. Negative environmental pressures can be mitigated by policies that ensure skilled leaders have emplaced functional systems of accountability. Ensuring that financial transactions are collaborative efforts amongst both client and PSC stakeholders appeared to be a particularly effective control measure.

All three drivers of ethical behaviour can be directly influenced by leadership skills and behaviours. This thesis's findings suggest that leadership skills involving: culturally aware personnel management, policy writing, fair and effective discipline systems, and client management are important for fostering a positive, organization-wide ethical climate. This thesis's findings further suggest that, to foster a positive, organization-wide ethical climate, leaders must: communicate honestly, emphasize teamwork and collaboration, train personnel, exercise a duty of care over personnel, vet personnel, establish top-down enforcement mechanisms, and allocate adequate resources to allow subordinates to perform tasks in ethical ways.

Finally, although an exact magnitude of leadership's impact on the drivers of ethical behaviour cannot be determined, this thesis does demonstrate that leaders can impact on ethical behaviour to some degree. Actions and behaviours attributable to leaders both inside and outside of the private security industry have changed and, to some extent, diminished ethical challenges facing PSC personnel in hostile environments. While written rules and regulations are important, PSC personnel are more likely to emulate and be influenced by behaviour exemplified by leaders at all levels of decision-making authority.

The following graphic summarizes the new information discovered by the research underlying this thesis:

Drivers of Ethical Behaviour	Skills & Behaviours that Impact on Drivers of Ethical Behaviour		The Magnitude of Leadership's Impact
<p><b>Understanding Security in a Commercial Context</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Differences exist between militaries and PSCs</li> <li>PSCs must be led in accordance with social &amp; ethical norms that pertain to commercial security</li> </ul>	<p><b>Skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At all levels, soft, social skills impact on the drivers of ethical behaviours</li> <li>Skills related to cultural awareness generally have the greatest impact due to the importance of LN cooperation</li> </ul>	<p><b>Behaviours:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At all levels, actions and behaviours can impact on the drivers of ethical behaviours</li> <li>Behaviours that facilitate the fair treatment &amp; welfare contractors have greatest impact</li> <li>Leaders must ensure subordinates are properly incentivized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership challenges have changed and diminished as a result of leaders developing new skills and changing their behaviours</li> <li>Leaders' behaviours have a greater impact on ethical behaviours than written rules</li> <li>The exact magnitude of the impact of leadership on ethical behaviour remains unknown</li> </ul>
<p><b>Understanding One's Personal Role in Establishing an Organization-Wide Ethical Climate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subordinate leaders are made aware of their roles via direction from senior leaders</li> <li>Subordinate leaders must be empowered to fulfil their roles via systems emplaced by senior leaders</li> </ul>	<p><b>Influential Skills:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personnel Mgmt: Cultural awareness</li> <li>Policy Writing &amp; Implementation</li> <li>Personnel Mgmt: Fair &amp; effective discipline systems</li> <li>Client Mgmt: Communication</li> </ol>	<p><b>Influential Behaviours:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicating openly &amp; honestly</li> <li>Collaborating</li> <li>Training</li> <li>Duty of care</li> <li>Vetting &amp; Selecting</li> <li>Enforcing via top-down mechanisms</li> <li>Allocating resources</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Personal Motivations to Fulfil the Responsibilities Inherent to One's Role</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negative cultural, institutional, and environmental influences can detract from personal motivations to behave ethically</li> <li>Negative influences can be mitigated by policies that promote fairness, loyalty, and accountability</li> </ul>			

## Chapter Six: Discussion of Other Empirical Evidence

Analyses of the data gathered from interview participants, described in chapters four and five, suggest that four leadership skills and seven leadership behaviours can positively influence the willingness and abilities of PSC personnel to adhere to prescribed rules, standards, codes, and principles. This chapter examines information originating from sources outside of the private security industry to help broaden the range of data and to further support the findings of this thesis through information triangulation. The sources include academic research focused on the mental health and welfare of contractors operating in hostile environments, government publications focussed on PSC-military interactions during the occupation of Iraq, and reports generated by international NGOs and humanitarian aid organizations concerned with disaster relief and global ethics. To some extent, each of these sources corroborates the findings of the research underlying this thesis. The external sources, discussed throughout this chapter, suggest that many of the leadership skills and behaviours identified as influential in this thesis have positively influenced the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel.

### Health and Welfare Research Pertaining to PSCs

Several research projects examining the health and welfare of PSC contractors operating in hostile environments offer some external support for some of the findings of the research underlying this thesis. In a report commissioned by the RAND Corporation, Dunigan et al. assert that although contractors' overall health ratings are generally positive, a notable percentage of British PSC personnel are vulnerable to mental health issues including PTSD, depression, and alcohol abuse.<sup>593</sup> The report concludes with a discussion of policy recommendations that suggests the importance of PSC leaders 'exercising a duty of care' for their contractors.<sup>594</sup> To prevent mental health issues, the report urges PSC leaders to create policies and programmes that support the mental well-being of their contractors before, during, and/or after deployments to hostile environments.<sup>595</sup> Because mental illness (including PTSD, depression, and/or drug and alcohol abuse) has reportedly been a factor in many of the incidences of PSC personnel inflicting undesired violence on themselves and

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<sup>593</sup> (Dunigan et al., 2013, p. xv, *Summary*) 12% of British PSC personnel met the criteria for probable PTSD and 9% of British PSC personnel met the criteria for depression.

<sup>594</sup> (Dunigan et al., 2013, p. 75)

<sup>595</sup> (Dunigan et al., 2013, p. 76)

civilian populations, it is argued that leader-driven policies and programmes supporting the mental health of PSC personnel could reduce problematic behaviour associated with mental illness.<sup>596</sup> Dunigan et al.'s findings appear to corroborate this thesis's assertion that leadership behaviours that exemplify concern for the health, safety, morale, and welfare of contractors can have a positive impact on PSC personnel's ethical behaviour.<sup>597</sup>

Smaller studies have produced results similar to those of Dunigan et al. suggesting further support for the findings of the research underlying this thesis. Feinstein and Botes's internet-based psychiatric assessment (a survey) found "the number of contractors whose scores exceeded the cut-off points for depression, psychological distress, and excessive weekly alcohol consumption were 20%, 28%, and 17%, respectively."<sup>598</sup> Messenger et al. also had similar findings: "private security contractors are exposed to a number of stressors (traumatic and otherwise) known to [also] increase psychiatric difficulty in military personnel."<sup>599</sup> And Schulz and Yeung suggest that there is a relatively high frequency of mental illness (particularly PTSD) within some PSCs.<sup>600</sup>

Relevant to this thesis, each of these three studies suggest that mental health problems known to degrade the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel can be mitigated by PSC and client (or government) leaders exercising a duty of care for the well-being of contractors. The 'duty of care' suggested in these studies specifically included providing pre-deployment training to educate and prepare contractors for the psychological risks they will face,<sup>601</sup> reducing real and

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<sup>596</sup> Dunigan and Farmer (2015) assert that Blackwater's 2007 Nisour Square incident may have been prevented had PSC leaders properly screened and supported the mental health and welfare of their contractors. Greenberg (2012) suggests that G4S could have prevented armed contractor Danny Fitzsimons from murdering his two colleagues in 2009 had robust vetting procedures uncovered his symptoms of PTSD. Norman et al. (2015) and Rodriguez et al. (2012) that respectively show "PTSD is associated with increased risk of violence" and that PTSD makes it more difficult for people (including PSC personnel) to socialize and perform in their workplaces. Miller (2010) discusses PTSD-related suicide rates amongst unarmed contractors, noting that PSC-hired insurance companies cannot be relied upon to reduce (or pay for) problematic behaviour associated with PTSD.

<sup>597</sup> (Theme #14: focused codes #21 and 72) and Leadership Behaviour (B4) "Exercising a duty of care over contractors "ensuring health & safety; morale & welfare" as shown in Chapter Five in the table entitled *Summary of Influential Leadership Behaviours*

<sup>598</sup> (Feinstein & Botes, 2009, p. 102) Feinstein and Botes's sample population was small (n=79) and the sample population was not limited to armed British PSC personnel. However, the results are useful for suggesting that people PSC personnel in hostile environments may be vulnerable to high rates of depression, psychological distress, and alcohol consumption.

<sup>599</sup> (Messenger, Farquharson, Stallworthy, Cawkill, & Greenberg, 2012, p. 864) Messenger et al.'s study includes only armed private security contractors, however, it is a very small Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) study with a sample population of (n=7).

<sup>600</sup> Schulz and Yeung's (2008, pp. 8–9) report is designed to provide guidance and recommendations for improving the behaviour of PSC personnel as it relates to gender issues. The report usefully highlights how mental health issues, including PTSD, can increase the likelihood of PSC personnel committing gender-based and/or domestic violence.

<sup>601</sup> (Dunigan et al., 2013, p. 75; Feinstein & Botes, 2009, p. 104; Schulz & Yeung, 2008, p. 9)

perceived barriers to accessing mental and physical health care services,<sup>602</sup> and instituting reliable and predictable leave rotations and schemes.<sup>603</sup> These suggestions closely match the suggestions of the participants of the research underlying this thesis. This research's participants directly stated that leadership behaviours that facilitate training<sup>604</sup> can help ensure PSC personnel are mentally prepared for challenges inherent to working in hostile environments, reducing their risk of developing PTSD. Participants also indicated the importance of *perceiving* leaders as caring for 'the health and welfare of contractors.'<sup>605</sup> While some barriers to accessing mental and physical health care services are real (stemming from a lack of insurance cover or nearby facilities), other barriers are perceptual (stemming from the belief that seeking care could negatively affect their employability). Finally, many participants included 'morale' and degrees of predictability with regards to leave and personnel rotation schedules as a part of "exercising a duty of care". If it is true that lengthy deployments increase the risk of PTSD and depression amongst PSC personnel operating in hostile environments,<sup>606</sup> then there is a possibility that leaders can help to mitigate challenges associated with PTSD through good human resource management practices.

Existing research on the mental health and welfare of contractors does not directly discuss the impact of leadership on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel; but it does clearly discuss the consequences of behavioural and policy failures that can be attributed to PSC leaders. It also does not (yet) identify leaders or companies that have avoided unethical behaviour through training and/or exercising a duty of care; but it does point to leader-driven policies and practices that, when applied, could very likely improve contractors' willingness and abilities to adhere to prescribed ethical and social norms. Existing mental health research therefore indirectly supports some of the findings of the research underlying this thesis.

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<sup>602</sup> Studies suggested several barriers that leaders could help to reduce. Messenger et al. (2012, p. 865) state that perceived stigmas and embarrassment can inhibit contractors from seeking help. Dunigan et al. (2013, pp. 65–69) state that embarrassment, stigmatization, and fear of damaging one's career are leading barriers to seeking help. These findings suggest that PSC personnel face similar barriers to seeking health care as military personnel.

<sup>603</sup> (Messenger et al., 2012, pp. 863, 865) Similar to the findings of Buckman et al. (2010) who studied the mental health effects of lengthy military deployments, Dunigan et al.'s (2013, p. 43) research suggested that lengthy deployments might also increase the risk of PTSD and depression amongst PSC personnel operating in hostile environments.

<sup>604</sup> Leadership Behaviour (B3) "Training affiliated personnel (including both clients and contractors)" is comprised of focused codes #6, 18, 25, and 78

<sup>605</sup> Leadership Behaviour (B4) "Exercising a duty of care over contractors (ensuring health & safety; morale & welfare)" is comprised of focused codes #21, 72, 75, and 109

<sup>606</sup> (Dunigan et al., 2013, p. 43)

## Academic Research and Government Publications Pertaining to PSCs

Academic research and government publications that examine the evolution of control measures pertaining to PSCs in Iraq are a second source of external information offering some support for the findings of the research underlying this thesis. From approximately 2003 - 2011, Iraq was a very lucrative market for the private security industry. The US-led coalition paid millions of US dollars to British and US PSCs alike in exchange for armed security services throughout the occupation.<sup>607</sup> By many accounts, however (described in detail in Chapter One: *Introduction*), the rapid growth of the industry in Iraq was marred by incidences of undesired violence and corrupt or unfair business practices. As a direct result of one particularly egregious violent incident, Blackwater's Nisour Square shooting in September 2007, the US government "took actions to improve [its] coordination and oversight of PSCs involved in serious incidents."<sup>608</sup> Isenberg recounts several steps that leaders of the Multi-National Force – Iraq (MNF-I) took to help ensure that PSC personnel adhered to the Laws of Armed Conflict and Rules for the Use of Force. Most importantly, MNF-I leaders established the Armed Contractor Oversight Division (ACOD) in November 2007 (later renamed the Armed Contractor Oversight Bureau) which was "responsible for developing policies for and investigating incidents of the use of force by PSCs". The ACOD monitored, reviewed, and reported "all PSC incidents...involving injuries, deaths, negative reports in the media, weapon discharges, complaints...and other allegations of PSC misconduct."<sup>609</sup> Policies established by the ACOD included considerably more detailed reporting requirements for PSCs, especially regarding serious incidents<sup>610</sup> and movements. New ACOD policies also designated six CONtractor Operations Cells (CONOCs) as central collection points for all PSC-related reports and incidents.<sup>611</sup> The following chart shows the

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<sup>607</sup> Aegis Defence Services, a British PSC, received \$293 million for one contract alone. Nelson (2008, p. 281) further notes that some estimates of US government spending on PSCs was "in the tens of billions of dollars"; however, this figure includes money paid to companies that were unarmed and do not fit the definition of "PSCs" used in this thesis.

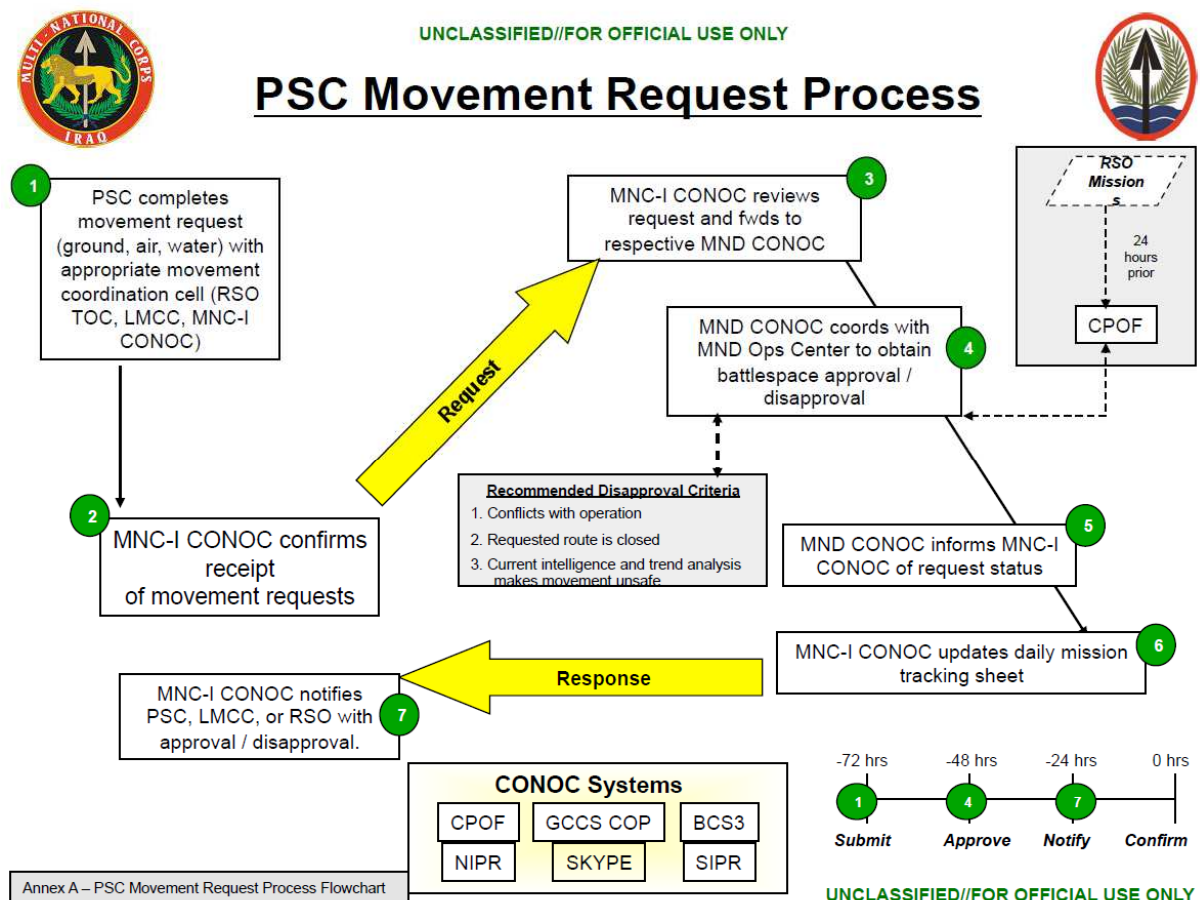
<sup>608</sup> (S. W. Bowen, 2011, p. 1)

<sup>609</sup> (Isenberg, 2010) Isenberg's account is a brief and insightful summary.

<sup>610</sup> "According to DoD guidance, a serious incident includes but is not limited to "any damage of equipment or injury to persons, attacks, any weapons discharge, criminal acts, traffic accidents, incidents involving ISF [Iraqi Security Forces] and any incident believed to have possible strategic or operational impact. Incidents where aggressive personal behavior and "share the road" policies are violated shall [also] be reported.'" (S. W. Bowen, 2011, p. 1)

<sup>611</sup> Solis (2009, p. 21) describes MNF-I's steps to establish greater visibility and control over PSCs in Iraq in greater detail than Isenberg's summary. Aegis Defence Services, a British PSC working within the CONOC, was responsible for coordinating the movement requests of all other PSCs in Iraq. In a single exemplary year, the CONOC tracked 98,892 PSC missions (Aegis Defence Services, 2009).

complex series of checks and coordinating efforts that movement reports filed by PSCs went through before receiving the CONOC's approval:



(US Government, 2009)

Petersohn provides evidence that suggests the establishment of the ACOD and its associated reporting mechanisms (including the CONOCs) succeeded in improving communication between MNF-I personnel and their contracted PSCs, as well as client-level supervision over PSCs and their use of force. Petersohn's examination of the US military's ability to overcome coordination and control issues regarding PSCs in Iraq concluded that the ACOD solved or improved problems with PSC behaviour via proactive, top-down oversight.<sup>612</sup> US government documents also point to improvements after the ACOD began enforcing policies regarding reporting, vehicle markings, and the Rules for the Use of Force. The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) noted that "the predominant types of serious incidents have changed over the last few years from attacks and shots fired to

<sup>612</sup> (Petersohn, 2011, pp. 794–795)

traffic accidents and harassments at checkpoints.”<sup>613</sup> The commanding general of the Iraqi Ministry of Interior’s equivalent of the [ACOD] was also reportedly “very satisfied with the US government’s efforts to inform his ministry of serious incidents involving Iraqi civilians, property damage, and security forces,”<sup>614</sup> suggesting that his ministry felt that incidents were being reported accurately and in a timely manner.

It is clear that Escalation of Force (EOF) incidents involving PSCs declined after the establishment of the ACOD.<sup>615</sup> The reduction in the number of violent incidents involving PSCs was, at least in part, a direct result of the ACOD enforcing policies written to encourage coordination, communication, and accountability; all directed through top-down oversight. This argument is compatible with this research’s findings that ethical challenges facing contractors in hostile environments diminish when leaders implement and enforce policies that enhance transparency, supervision, and accountability.<sup>616</sup>

It is noteworthy that several issues that make it difficult to determine the full extent to which client leaders were able to influence the behaviour of PSC personnel through the ACOD and its policies. Petersohn notes, “one could argue that the success [had] little to do with the measures taken by the armed forces, but [was] rather the result of the overall improvement in security since 2007.”<sup>617</sup> Also, the military drawdown in 2008 might have reduced the number of opportunities for friendly-fire incidents and reduced MNF-I’s ability to detect unreported EOF incidents. PSC personnel may have underreported or misreported EOF incidences out of self-interest, thus skewing the data.<sup>618</sup> The approval of the commanding general of the Iraqi Ministry of Interior’s equivalent of the [ACOD] suggests that the ACOD’s account of EOFs taking place satisfactorily matched the reports he was receiving from the Iraqi military and local nationals within his community; however, a variety of factors could affect the commanding general’s satisfaction levels and it cannot be determined if reporting on the Iraqi’s side was any more or less accurate than reporting on MNF-I’s side.

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<sup>613</sup> (S. W. Bowen, 2011, p. 2)

<sup>614</sup> (S. W. Bowen, 2011, p. 7)

<sup>615</sup> Evidence suggests that PSCs in Iraq were always less likely to initiate fire on Iraqi or US military security forces than vice-versa. Numbers of incidents further declined after the ACOD’s establishment in 2007 (Dunigan, 2011, pp. 59–61; Petersohn, 2013, p. 8).

<sup>616</sup> (Theme #16: focused code #42: 13 sources; 40 references) ‘Ethical challenges have diminished as regulatory systems have matured.’ As one participants stated: “...the CONOC was established and there were parameters and vehicle markings put in place. Once the transponders we put in everyone’s vehicles, you couldn’t get away with it. There was licensing and you had to have your numbers on your vehicles. Mission planning had to take place...using mission request forms submitted 72 hours prior to movement” (Interview #13)

<sup>617</sup> (Petersohn, 2011, p. 796)

<sup>618</sup> (Dunigan, 2011, pp. 60–61)



Petersohn's and others' critical concerns about the full impact of the ACOD and its policies merit serious consideration. However, the example of the ACOD in Iraq and its influence on PSC behaviour still offers support for this thesis's findings. 'Policy writing' skills<sup>619</sup> such as those exhibited by the MNF-I (client) leaders that outlined the duties, responsibilities, and procedures of the ACOD and its supporting organizations appear to have had a positive influence on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. Positive effects from 'cooperation and collaboration'<sup>620</sup> were apparent when PSC movement reports were filed properly and shared with pertinent MNF-I and Iraqi security forces to de-conflict operations. Improved visibility on movements appeared to additionally encourage 'open and honest communication'<sup>621</sup> with regards to accurately reporting serious incidents. And, finally, the entire system, which originated at the client level and flowed down to contracted PSCs and their personnel, exemplified the effectiveness of a 'top-down enforcement'<sup>622</sup> strategy for positively influencing ethical behaviour.

#### NGO and Humanitarian Aid Organization Reports Pertaining to PSCs

As a final source of external information, there are some reports generated by international NGOs and humanitarian aid organizations concerned with global ethics which appear to support the findings of the research underlying this thesis. Beginning in the 1990s, non-governmental and UN humanitarian organizations increasingly employed PSCs to protect their people and premises in austere environments. At the outset, most of the security personnel hired by humanitarian organizations were unarmed and few policies or guidelines existed to help humanitarian organizations determine the "ethical and management dimensions of using [PSCs]".<sup>623</sup> By the 2000s, however, NGOs significantly increased the extent to which they outsourced armed security.<sup>624</sup> The European Interagency Security

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<sup>619</sup> Leadership Skill (S2) "Policy writing and implementation (using military leadership experience to help create and enforce organization-wide behaviour management systems)" is comprised of focused codes #83 and 108

<sup>620</sup> Leadership Behaviour (B2) "Emphasizing cooperation, collaboration, and teamwork when solving problems" is comprised of focused codes #15, 20, 69, 80, 89, 111, and 131

<sup>621</sup> Leadership Behaviour (B1) "Communicating openly and honestly, using only rigorously assessed information" is comprised of focused codes #90, 94, and 95

<sup>622</sup> Leadership Behaviour (B6) "Enforcing ethics through top-down mechanisms" is comprised of focused codes #79, 110, and 113

<sup>623</sup> (Vaux, Seiple, Nakano, & Van Brabant, 2001, p. 8) Van Brabant (2001) conducted one of the first comprehensive reviews of security policies and procedures of major humanitarian aid organizations and found that most companies lacked an informed set of guidelines useful for determining when and which PSCs should be hired. A subsequent review by Singer (2006, p. 70), five years later, resulted in similar findings.

<sup>624</sup> (HPN, 2010, p. 74; Singer, 2006, pp. 67–68; Speers Mears, 2009, pp. 3–4, 6; Stoddard, Harmer, & DiDomenico, 2008, p. 7; Vaux et al., 2001, p. 10; Von Tangen Page, 2004, p. 9) The trend is clear and the

Forum (EISF), an organization that seeks to improve safety and security conditions for international aid workers, asserts that the rise humanitarian organizations' use of armed security was a result of an increase in the number of aid workers deployed to hostile environments and "the increased vulnerability of NGOs to (targeted) violence".<sup>625</sup> Stoddard's review of attacks on humanitarian workers between 1997 and 2005 determined that out of 947 attacks against aid workers, nearly 60% targeted staff members (as opposed to property) and nearly 79% targeted local nationals (as opposed to expat workers).<sup>626</sup> Hiring PSCs to provide armed protection appeared to some organizations as a necessary step if they wanted to continue to provide humanitarian aid services in hostile environments.<sup>627</sup>

As the employment of PSCs became more prevalent, critics increasingly voiced concerns about the ethical capacities of PSCs and whether hiring PSCs undermines humanitarian efforts. Many critical concerns about PSCs as they relate to NGOs and humanitarian aid organizations appear to be very similar to critical concerns about the private security industry in general. Critics have noted that the PSC industry is not well-regulated and that NGOs and aid organizations should not rely on external legal accountability to restrain the behaviour of their private security service providers.<sup>628</sup> Singer asserts that self-regulation is a weak guarantor and that market forces and reputational concerns are insufficient to ensure that PSC personnel adhere to social and ethical norms whilst working for NGOs.<sup>629</sup> As an example, only a few weeks after Blackwater's Nissour Square Massacre, a PSC called Unity Resources

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sources cited here each lament that aid industry leaders often refuse to openly acknowledge that they hire PSCs in certain locations.

<sup>625</sup> (EISF, 2011, p. 7) Stoddard et al.'s (2006, p. 13) analyses support assertions that NGO and aid workers have become increasingly vulnerable to attack. Vaux et al. (2001, p. 12) also suggest that aid organizations, particularly in parts of Africa, no longer receive the deference from militant groups that they previously enjoyed.

<sup>626</sup> (Stoddard et al., 2008, pp. 7–9) "Attacks" include killings, kidnappings, and assaults. An earlier survey by Sheik et al. similarly revealed that the leading cause of death amongst aid workers was intentional violence. Between 1985 and 1998, 72% of deaths were caused by attacks (Sheik et al., 2000). More recently, Stoddard, Hamer, and Ryou (2014, p. 1) determined that the increasing trend of intentional violence towards aid workers has continued up to 2013.

<sup>627</sup> British PSCs that have been hired to provide armed security services for NGOs and humanitarian organizations include Defence Systems Ltd., ArmorGroup, and CRG (Singer, 2006, p. 69; Vaux et al., 2001, p. 14). International NGOs and humanitarian aid organizations that have hired PSCs include several UN subsidiaries, the ICRC, WFP, CARE, Caritas, USAID, and DfID (Vaux et al., 2001, pp. 14–16). Hostile environments where the armed services of PSCs have been deemed necessary to continue relief operations include Afghanistan, Bosnia, Chechnya, the DRC, Haiti, Iraq, Kosovo, Somalia, and Sudan (Singer, 2006, p. 68; Stoddard et al., 2006, p. 8).

<sup>628</sup> (Singer, 2006, pp. 78–79; Speers Mears, 2009, p. 8)

<sup>629</sup> (Singer, 2006, pp. 75–77) This assertion is supported by other critics who apply the same criticism to the private security industry as a whole (De Nevers, 2010; Hurst, 2010; Maffai, 2009).

Group allegedly killed two Iraqi women and wounded a third woman holding a child while providing security for a convoy of Research Triangle Institute personnel.<sup>630</sup>

Similar to the findings of the research underlying this thesis, reports offering guidance to NGOs and humanitarian organizations that employ PSCs consistently suggest that ethical behaviour must be enforced through top-down oversight mechanisms originating at the client level.<sup>631</sup> This appears to be particularly true in hostile environments where governments and even NGOs themselves have difficulty monitoring and enforcing IHLs. A pervasive theme discussed in nearly every security management review of humanitarian aid organizations for the past 15 years is: whilst many NGOs and aid organizations hire PSCs, very few of them have established policies for vetting and selecting ethical PSCs. Policies for governing PSC behaviour once a PSC is hired are also severely lacking.<sup>632</sup> It is the responsibility of NGOs (clients) to write (or at least approve) SOPs that dictate PSCs' Rules of Engagement/ Rules for the Use of Force.<sup>633</sup> Singer notes, "In all this discussion, it is important to remember what drives [PSCs'] business: these firms do not hire themselves; they are hired to meet the needs of their clients."<sup>634</sup>

Critics have also noted that the private security industry is not always transparent enough to enable NGOs and aid organizations to be sure of a PSC's affiliations with other groups or governments; or of a PSCs' resourcing practices.<sup>635</sup> EISF cautions that some PSCs may have "a history of unethical operations, connections to illegitimate actors, or activities that are incompatible with humanitarian principles."<sup>636</sup> It is sometimes the case that local PSCs (which may be inadvertently or purposefully subcontracted by British PSCs) lack authorization to carry and use firearms. And local PSCs have been known to exacerbate

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<sup>630</sup> (Weuts, 2007, p. 12) Research Triangle Institute is a USAID-funded non-profit research organization. The datedness of this example is noteworthy: many new rules were implemented after the Blackwater incident; however, a few weeks would not have been enough time for those rules to have taken effect.

<sup>631</sup> Leadership Behaviour (B6) "Enforcing ethics through top-down mechanisms" is comprised of focused codes #79, 110, and 113

<sup>632</sup> (EISF, 2011, pp. 13–14; HPN, 2010, p. 82; Singer, 2006, pp. 70–79; Speers Mears, 2009, p. 10; Stoddard et al., 2008, pp. 24, 27; Vaux et al., 2001, p. 18)

<sup>633</sup> (HPN, 2010, p. 81; Speers Mears, 2009, p. 10; Stoddard et al., 2008, p. 27; Vaux et al., 2001, p. 18)

<sup>634</sup> (Singer, 2006, p. 77)

<sup>635</sup> (Singer, 2006, p. 71; Speers Mears, 2009, p. 8; Vaux et al., 2001, p. 19)

<sup>636</sup> (EISF, 2011, p. 10); EISF does not name specific PSCs but similar concerns have been expressed by other critics of the private security industry in general. Amnesty International (2015), for example, has expressed concern over Blackwater firing the first shots in 84% of its Escalation of Force incidents. Also, many critics from academia and federal government investigations, referenced in Chapter One: *Introduction*, have criticized some PSCs' involvement in organized crime and black market arms dealing (Beswick & Jackson, 2014, p. 145; Filkins, 2010; Kawas, 2011; Miller, 2009).

insecurity by operating within local criminal networks and protection rackets.<sup>637</sup> Being escorted by a PSC can make aid organizations appear to be partnered with governments and/or private agendas that local populations may view as threatening.<sup>638</sup> Taliban forces in Pakistan and Afghanistan, for example, have threatened Western NGOs believing them to be part of an occupying force due to many organizations' relationships with Western governments.<sup>639</sup> Especially in places where local people do not make distinctions between PSCs, militaries, and other armed actors, hiring or associating with PSCs can jeopardize organizations' claims of neutrality which have, historically, provided NGO and aid workers with a modicum of deference from hostile actors.<sup>640</sup>

Reports that advise NGOs and humanitarian aid organizations on ways to overcome regulatory and transparency issues indirectly support this thesis' findings related to vetting, allocating adequate resources, and managing client expectations. This thesis asserts that PSCs must vet affiliated personnel, including their contracted personnel and subcontracted service providers, to ensure that they are not hiring known deviants or otherwise supporting criminal organizations.<sup>641</sup> Reports written to advise NGOs agree that leaders can minimize their chances of being associated with undesirable violence and unfair or corrupt business practices by properly vetting their business partners. NGOs are advised to vet their PSCs and to give their informed approval of the processes that PSCs use to vet their own personnel.<sup>642</sup> This thesis also asserts that it is important for PSCs to allocate adequate resources to missions to ensure that junior leaders have the means to accomplish their security tasks in accordance with social and ethical norms.<sup>643</sup> Both the EISF and the Humanitarian Practice Network (HPN) specifically note the importance of adequately paying armed security personnel so that they are not tempted to attempt to make money through informal channels such as bribery,

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<sup>637</sup> (EISF, 2011, pp. 15–16; Vaux et al., 2001, p. 13) Speers-Mears (2009, p. 8) notes further criminal activity including arms and people trafficking, prostitution and labour law violations. These concerns are addressed more broadly in Chapter One: *Introduction*. Civil society appears to be most concerned with the behaviour of PSCs as it relates to inflicting or supporting undesired violence and engaging in corrupt or unfair business practices.

<sup>638</sup> Stoddard et al. (2006, p. 23) asserts that many NGOs and aid organizations have been pressured by Western donor governments to operate in Afghanistan and other hostile environments as “force multipliers” in the war on terror. Aid workers are sometimes reliant on armed PSCs in hostile environments and, in some cases, the same PSCs are also openly providing services to Western governments. According to Stoddard et al., the loss of the appearance of neutrality puts aid workers at increased risk.

<sup>639</sup> (Speers Mears, 2009, p. 10)

<sup>640</sup> (Bjork & Jones, 2005, pp. 781–782; HPN, 2010, pp. 77–78; Rogers, 1998; Singer, 2006, p. 69)

<sup>641</sup> Leadership Behaviour (B5) “Vetting affiliated personnel” is comprised of focused codes #2, 10, 13, 71, 74, and 76.

<sup>642</sup> (EISF, 2011, p. 13; HPN, 2010, pp. 76, 79; Singer, 2006, pp. 73, 79; Speers Mears, 2009, p. 10; Stoddard et al., 2008, p. 23; Vaux et al., 2001, p. 15)

<sup>643</sup> Leadership Behaviour (B7) “Allocating adequate resources to missions (meeting service standards)” is comprised of focused code #19.

corrupt practices, and/or stealing.<sup>644</sup> And this thesis asserts that it is necessary for PSCs to clearly communicate with clients to manage their expectations and mitigate any potential conflicts of interests.<sup>645</sup> Several reports note that the benefits of expectation management are not lost on NGOs. Leaders from both NGOs (clients) and PSCs (vendors) are urged to fully communicate what they expect from each other and how they expect it to be done.<sup>646</sup> NGOs should ensure that PSCs have the primary goal of providing passive security and not pursue contracts with other organizations to engage enemies or capture criminals (especially in the same Area of Operations).<sup>647</sup> NGOs must also clarify in writing how they expect PSCs to demonstrate that they are adhering to the norms underpinning IHLs. Once that is clear, however, PSCs should ensure that NGOs understand the ramifications of shortcutting supervisory processes, failing to provide adequate notice to coordinate movements, and ignoring risk assessments. HPN advises, "...command and control works both ways: if an agency puts itself under the protection of an armed contractor, it will be expected to abide by their rules [as well]."<sup>648</sup> This advice supports one of this thesis' assertions: clients are less likely to knowingly or inadvertently pressure PSCs into ethical dilemmas if their expectations regarding the terms of service provision are properly managed.

A final theme in several reports related to NGO-PSC interactions is that NGOs and PSCs often have very different, and sometimes conflicting, organizational cultures. Singer states that the perspectives of many PSC personnel are shaped by "their particular military backgrounds" and that they tend to "think in military terms, of routes, sectors, and regions."<sup>649</sup> Stoddard et al. claims that "the 'acceptance' model of security favoured by most humanitarian organisations is in stark contrast to the typical [PSC] approach, which emphasises protection and deterrence."<sup>650</sup> EISF asserts that "It is not realistic to expect a [PSC]...to provide detailed training on humanitarian and organizational principles and ways of working. NGOs should ensure that the provider understands the operational criteria and

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<sup>644</sup> EISF (2011, p. 19) provides a checklist for NGOs to use when assessing the core competencies of PSCs. Included in the checklist are several points to ensure that PSCs are properly resourced to provide the services that they claim to be able to provide in a manner that conforms to the social and ethical norms inherent to IHLs. HPN (2010, p. 79) asserts that adequate pay, training, and equipment for PSC personnel is necessary so that they do not become "more of a liability than a help."

<sup>645</sup> Leadership Skill (S4) "Using clear communication to manage client expectations and mitigate conflicting interests" is comprised of focused code #114.

<sup>646</sup> (HPN, 2010; Singer, 2006; Stoddard et al., 2008)

<sup>647</sup> (HPN, 2010, p. 79)

<sup>648</sup> (HPN, 2010, p. 81) To provide an example, HPN refers to clients "suddenly leaving [convoys], speeding ahead, or driving off..."

<sup>649</sup> (Singer, 2006, p. 72)

<sup>650</sup> (Stoddard et al., 2008, p. 18)

aims of the NGO.”<sup>651</sup> It is easily arguable that there are important cultural differences between NGO and PSC perspectives on security and this thesis suggests that PSC leaders who understand security in a commercial context are more capable of understanding ‘soft’ (‘acceptance’-based, non-firepower oriented) security approaches. Reports that address NGO-PSC cultural differences indirectly support this thesis’ finding regarding the importance of leadership skills that support ‘culturally aware’ personnel management.<sup>652</sup>

Most of the focused codes that comprise Leadership Skill (S1) refer to PSCs understanding the cultures of local nationals. Culturally aware leaders can facilitate cooperation with LNs and gain access to information about local terrain, people, infrastructure, and business opportunities; all of which is a part of understanding security in a commercial context. However, if NGOs and humanitarian aid organizations are conducting missions in the same area of operations, then it is reasonable to assume that PSC leaders would benefit from understanding NGO organizational cultures as well. In these circumstances, it could be easily argued that NGOs make up one part of the local or regional culture. The benefits of PSC personnel understanding NGO organizational culture is all the more obvious when PSCs and NGOs are working together under a contractual agreement.

Finally, there is a criticism of PSCs, as they relate to NGOs, which is both pervasive and logical enough to bear mentioning. On a fundamental level unique to humanitarian organizations and NGOs, many critics have argued that carrying firearms is inherently contrary to humanitarian principles because it could result in (and even increase the chances of) loss of life.<sup>653</sup> Purchasing security only for one group may legitimize the use of force to determine “who gets access to aid and how it is received.” Rogers suggests that using weapons amounts to “[accepting] the terms on which conflict is fought”, making NGOs and aid organizations similar to “warring factions [that] make similar claims since they [also] purport to be resorting to weapons only to accomplish some ‘good’.”<sup>654</sup> For the purposes of this research, this criticism falls into the same category as criticisms of the greater private security industry which suggest that, on principle, PSCs are illegitimate actors and security

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<sup>651</sup> (EISF, 2011, p. 13)

<sup>652</sup> Leadership Skill (S1) “Using cultural awareness to help manage cultural differences and communicate with the predominant cultures of hostile environments” is comprised of focused codes #24, 33, 34, 129, and 130.

<sup>653</sup> EISF (2011, p. 15) and the Humanitarian Policy Network (HPN) (2010, p. 75) suggest that arms may be inherently incompatible with humanitarian principles. Vaux et al. (2001, p. 26) concisely presents the logic behind critical arguments against humanitarian organizations’ use of armed PSCs, exemplified in an interview with a CARE representative.

<sup>654</sup> (Rogers, 1998); Vaux et al. (2001, p. 28) further supports Rogers’ suggestion by paraphrasing Mary Anderson: “The use or contracting for the use of armed force by any actor in this context may implicitly or explicitly accept the terms and means of war, legitimise them, mirror them, and perpetuate them.”

should not be treated as a private good.<sup>655</sup> As discussed in Chapter Two: *Review of Literature* in the section entitled *Defining the Private Military and Security Industry*, this thesis accepts that ‘the trend for privatizing security will continue into the foreseeable future, rendering further debate on ‘legitimacy’ largely moot.’ The use of PSCs is a current reality for many organizations, including NGOs and humanitarian organizations.<sup>656</sup> And the scope of this thesis remains limited to discussions of how leaders can influence the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel.

## Summary

This chapter seeks to corroborate the findings of the research underling this thesis by examining empirical evidence of the impact of leadership on the ethical behaviour of British PSC personnel originating from outside of the private security industry. The literature review conducted to write this chapter revealed very few sources of reliable information.<sup>657</sup> No bespoke research on the subject of ‘leadership’s impact on the ethical behaviour of PSCs’ was found. However, several sources indirectly supported the findings of the research underlying this thesis. The limited amount of research available regarding the mental health and welfare of contractors in hostile environments appeared to provide some support for Leadership Behaviours (B3) ‘Training affiliated personnel’ and (B4) ‘Exercising a duty of care,’ Academic research and government reports examining the evolution of oversight mechanisms pertaining to PSCs in Iraq were a second external source of information. Many of these documents suggested support for the Leadership Skill (S2) ‘Policy writing’ and Leadership Behaviours (B1) ‘Communicating openly and honestly’, (B2) ‘Emphasizing cooperation and collaboration, and (B6) ‘Enforcing ethics through top-down mechanisms’. Finally, reports generated by international NGOs and humanitarian aid organizations concerned with disaster relief and global ethics appeared to support this thesis’s assertions about the influence of Leadership Skills that facilitate (S1) ‘Culturally aware’ personnel management and (S4) ‘Client expectation management’. NGO reports also appeared to support this thesis’s

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<sup>655</sup> (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2011, pp. 4–7; Avant, 2005, pp. 45–46; Krahmann, 2010, p. 3; Shannon, 2000)

<sup>656</sup> “No major humanitarian provider...can claim that it has never paid for armed security...Exceptional or not, armed security has been and stands to remain an incontestable reality for the international humanitarian community” (Stoddard et al., 2008, p. 12).

<sup>657</sup> As explained in the section entitled *Theoretical and Methodological Frameworks* in Chapter Three, Grounded Theory was selected as the methodological framework for this study partially because it is a ‘methodology designed to explore social phenomena in areas where little research exists.’ The review of literature found no research on the subject of leadership skills and behaviours within PSCs.

assertions about the importance of Leadership Behaviours (B5) ‘Vetting affiliated personnel’ and (B7) ‘Allocating adequate resources.’

One influential leadership skill that did not appear to be supported by sources from outside the private security industry was (S3) Personnel management skills that facilitate the empathetic selection of fair and effective disciplinary techniques. It is possible that this leadership skill was not mentioned because many of the health and welfare studies conducted on PSC personnel focussed on negative (violent) environmental factors rather than stress associated with career progression. Many academic articles and government documents focused on PSC-military interactions and the accurate and timely exchange of information rather than internal human resource management processes. Similarly, many of the NGO and humanitarian aid organization reports focussed on PSC-NGO interactions. Organizations outside of the private security industry appeared to be concerned with how PSC personnel are selected, paid, and physically and psychologically supported; but, not with how PSC personnel are rated, promoted, or dismissed. It is possible that examining how PSC leaders evaluate and retain their personnel could help mental health researchers to find additional, relevant, stress factors. It might also help NGOs and humanitarian aid organizations to identify hidden affiliations and independently assess the quality of contracted and subcontracted PSC personnel. The section entitled *Recommendations for Additional Research* in Chapter Eight discusses some ways that the sources of external information used in this chapter might be further inform the subject of ‘leadership and ethical behaviour within PSCs.’



## Chapter Seven: Implications of Findings

The findings of the research underlying this thesis help to explain how, why, and to what extent leadership impacts on the ethical behaviour of British PSC personnel operating in hostile environments. The implications of these findings support and challenge debates regarding civil society's ability to control the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. This chapter begins with a discussion of what appears to be one of civil society's prominent concerns regarding influences on ethical behaviour: the financial motivations of PSCs and contractors. Extant arguments for and against concerns over the financial motivations of PSCs and contractors are given alongside new information that this thesis contributes to debates.

This chapter then examines one of the most prominent international efforts to regulate PSCs: an auditable list of standards entitled "PSC.1", codified by ASIS International.<sup>658</sup> PSC.1 provides a framework for measuring the degree to which a PSC adheres to the tenets of the International Code of Conduct (ICoC) for Private Security Companies.<sup>659</sup> Throughout the discussion, recommendations based on the findings of this research are made that might improve the effectiveness of PSC.1. This section includes a discussion of how this research may also usefully inform government policy efforts; particularly those efforts related to the impact of PSCs on military responsiveness. It concludes with a summary that discusses the indirect importance of regulation according to the findings of this thesis.

### Ensuring the Ethical Behaviour of PSC Personnel

The use of PSCs as security providers has sparked debate regarding the extent to which the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel can be ensured. Historically, the ethical behaviour and capacities of PSC personnel have been examined through the lens of political theory. PSC literature appears to focus on the commercial motivations of private security contractors and the regulatory mechanisms that are available for ensuring that PSC personnel behave according to social and ethical norms. To date, however, 'contractor ethos' has not been sufficiently researched for definitive value judgments to be made about motivation. This thesis contributes new information to the 'motivation' debate by suggesting that leaders can

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<sup>658</sup> ASIS International (2014) is a major US-based membership and lobby group for the private security industry. ASIS International is a global industry organization with more than 38,000 members in 234 chapters worldwide.

<sup>659</sup> (ICRC, 2010)

leverage the commercial orientation of PSCs to advantage and that PSC personnel may, in many cases, be highly incentivized to behave ethically.

PSC literature addressing motivation and ethical behaviour appears to be dominated by concerns about the for-profit nature of PSCs.<sup>660</sup> Even when ‘motivation’ is distinguished from ‘intention,’ the use of PSCs can still be considered problematic because corporate-level PSC leaders ‘intend’ to make money rather than to contribute to security for its own sake.<sup>661</sup> The implication here is that when circumstances are no longer profitable, PSCs may abandon their clients. Some recent authors go so far as to suggest that PSCs may even switch sides during conflict if an opponent offers more money;<sup>662</sup> concerns appear to stem from historical accounts of mercenary disloyalty. However, these concerns do not factor in PSC leaders’ apparent (over-riding) concern for the reputations of themselves, their companies, and the industry at large.<sup>663</sup>

To date, concerns about PSCs abandoning clients when contracts are no longer profitable remain hypothetical.<sup>664</sup> Spearin demonstrates that the market at least partially discourages firms from reneging on contractual obligations. Although some PSCs are large enough to absorb a certain amount of reputational damage, large PSCs may let down clients only if they are successfully providing support in other areas such that a failure will not force them into bankruptcy.<sup>665</sup> While it is possible that a British PSC might switch customers on the *same* side during a conflict, this thesis’s findings suggest that leaders would be unlikely to

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<sup>660</sup> Krahmann (2008, pp. 259–260), for example, asserts that, because of the commercial nature of the private security industry, contractors are inherently amoral, lacking in humanitarian, patriotic, or democratic values. Schreier and Caparini (2005, p. 46) claim “the profit motive and the inflexibility of contractor personnel also contribute to their lack of commitment to the overall objectives of the military mission.” Singer (2003a, pp. 217–220) provides a more balanced assessment noting that “by privatising military services, certain motivations for good behaviour appear to be increased.” Some authors focus on the potential advantages that the commercial orientation of PSCs might offer. Commercial security providers might also be an asset when states are reluctant to take action (D. Brooks, 2000a, 2002a, p. 1, 2002b, p. 5; Shearer, 1998); or when circumstances require politically neutral interlocutors (Baker & Pattison, 2012, pp. 13–14). Bures (2005) discusses peacekeeping tasks that PSCs might perform for profit in lieu of reluctant states. The profit motive of PSC personnel is a popular discussion topic amongst authors addressing motivation and ethical behaviour (Andrés, 2012, p. 231; Minow, 2004, p. 1021; Richemond-Barak, 2011, p. 169; Spearin, 2005).

<sup>661</sup> Pattison (2008, pp. 147–148) and Machairas (2014, p. 50) distinguish between “motivation” and “intention” but come to similar conclusions about PSCs being problematic.

<sup>662</sup> (Dogru, 2010, pp. 5, 42–43; Hartley, 2004, p. 205; Holmila, 2012, p. 47)

<sup>663</sup> (Theme #8)

<sup>664</sup> Pattison (2008, pp. 147–148) states that “it is unlikely that the market acts as a strong disincentive for firms that deviate from or terminate their contractual obligations;” but Pattison’s evidence is unconvincing. Pattison cites the case of DynCorp evacuating its personnel from Monrovia, Liberia when heavy fighting broke out in 1990; however, his sources (Fidler & Catán, 2003; Yeoman, 2003) do not make it clear that the DynCorp personnel present had any obligation or expertise to stay and fight. The sources do make it clear that ICI, another PSC on the ground, “struck a deal with nearby American diplomats: ICI [was] granted protection within the embassy in exchange for helping to defend it.” In line with their agreement, ICI successfully defended the embassy and the company was rewarded for a job well-done.

<sup>665</sup> (Spearin, 2005, p. 246)

make a switch if switching would cause irrecoverable reputational damage.<sup>666</sup> Possible legal repercussions aside, the unwillingness of PSC leaders to jeopardize long-term commercial opportunities appears to discourage disreputable behaviour.

This thesis additionally supports the suggestion that market forces incentivize PSC personnel to complete contracts in an ethical manner; particularly when the definition of ethics is broadened to include adhering to IHLs and ‘delivering agreed upon service standards.’<sup>667</sup> In some cases, the for-profit orientation of PSC personnel may actually *increase* ethical behaviour: professional PSC personnel appear to understand that their contracts and salaries can be terminated for poor service delivery; contractors seeking long-term career opportunities in the private security industry are motivated to perform well in order to retain their positions.<sup>668</sup> ‘Performing well’ can encompass both adherence to IHLs and accomplishing missions even in the face of danger. Adhering to rules, standards, codes, and principles (including IHLs) is a central concern of this thesis.<sup>669</sup> This thesis’s findings support Brooks and Streng who discuss how market forces can affect contractors’ willingness to adhere to IHLs.<sup>670</sup> Brooks and Streng provide examples of military peacekeepers who have committed atrocities without any real repercussions to the soldiers or their militaries; they compare this to PSCs that have been ruined by the poor behaviour of a few individuals. The implication is that the commercial context in which PSCs operate can incentivize individuals to adhere to IHLs. Career-minded PSC personnel also appear to be willing to spend much more time deployed in order to achieve long-term, stable careers.<sup>671</sup> Some PSC personnel voiced concerns over a ‘survive-and-go-home’ attitude that they believed hindered some peoples’ abilities to deliver effective, ethical, security services during security operations.<sup>672</sup> One participant differentiated between military (non-profit) and PSC (for-profit) motivations, demonstrating that some PSC personnel feel they are quite able to deliver agreed upon service standards:

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<sup>666</sup> (Theme # 8: “Reputational concerns and profitability as a motivator to protect reputation” is comprised of focused codes #51-55).

<sup>667</sup> The delivery of agreed-upon service standards represents fair conduct in a transactional relationship. Focused code #40 (entitled: “Delivering agreed-upon service standards, despite client and company pressures, is an ethical challenge”) demonstrates a link between service provision and ethical behaviour.

<sup>668</sup> This information is found in 11 references encompassed by focused code #115

<sup>669</sup> (Themes #13 and 14)

<sup>670</sup> (D. Brooks & Streng, 2012, p. 309)

<sup>671</sup> (Focused code #123: 5 sources; 7 references); further support for this statement can be seen in the two tables shown in Chapter Seven: *Conclusion*: “Debates Concerning the Impact of PSCs on Democratic Advantages”

<sup>672</sup> (Focused code #46: 7 sources; 23 references)

(Focused code #117: 10 sources; 21 references)

There is no way that an infantry section commander could have [performed the tasks that our PSC was performing]. It's not in his mandate. His mandate is: do my orders; get out; do the patrol; come back; and thank god that everyone is alive. Keep doing that for 15 months and we're done. I think [we, as PSC personnel, were able to contribute something of quality]...I found, that there was a real idealist perspective there and, from my personal perspective, I was very happy to have had an impact on things. We really didn't want to shit on our own doorstep; it was home.<sup>673</sup>

It is not possible to draw definite conclusions about differences between PSC and military personnel based on the data gathered during this study; however, the data does suggest that the commercial context in which PSC personnel operate does not prevent them from delivering the security services that they have agreed to perform.<sup>674</sup> Market forces appear to incentivize PSC personnel to take necessary risks (including volunteering to remain in hostile environments for extended periods of time) to 'deliver agreed upon service standards' without breaking IHLs.

A final concern regarding the for-profit motives of PSCs blends this debate with the regulatory issues presented in the latter section of this chapter. Kasher argues that the profit motives of PSCs may encourage PSC personnel to behave in line with legal codes rather than ethical norms.<sup>675</sup> Although legal codes are written to reflect ethical norms, the two are not always perfectly-synchronized; particularly in hostile environments where local regulations are often weak or non-existent. Ethical norms may evolve faster than legal codes can be re-written; or legal codes may reflect perspectives that are not shared by civil society at large. Kasher suggests that, when faced with an ethical challenge, PSCs will use legal codes to determine their course of action and that PSCs will perform to the lowest ethical standards that legal codes allow.

This thesis found that one way PSC leaders can demonstrate the priority that they place on ethical behaviour is by adhering to the 'spirit of the law' even when the letter of the law is permissive. PSCs can also create and publically adhere to their own ethical frameworks when it appears that there is no suitable legal framework to dictate ethical behaviour in a challenging situation.<sup>676</sup> Given the apparent relationship between reputation and profit and the willingness of clients to disown PSCs with damaged reputations, it seems likely that many

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<sup>673</sup> (Interview #21) This interview participant had (5-10) years of experience as a teeth-arms military leader, multiple combat deployments, and (5-10) years of experience as a PSC leader.

<sup>674</sup> (Theme # 4: "Contractors view themselves as effective and efficient security providers")

<sup>675</sup> (Kasher, 2008, p. 244); Carmola (2006, pp. 169–170) appears to support this argument citing the contractually-driven (rather than state or humanitarian-driven)(Cameron & Chetail, 2013; Carmola, 2006; Kasher, 2008) nature of PSC activities.

<sup>676</sup> (Focused code #61: 7 sources; 10 references)

PSC leaders consider the ‘spirit of the law’ to be more important than rote adherence to legal codes.<sup>677</sup> The following quote demonstrates how PSC leaders may distinguish between legal imperatives and ethical norms:

[I would relate reputation to] the ‘spirit’ of the law; absolutely, I would. To any court, the letter of the law is pretty important. But the newspapers, the media, are a concern to any big company and they are acting on the spirit of the law. [For example,] look at this big company in Bangladesh [whose building collapsed, killing 70 workers]; this is an international clothing company that certainly obeyed Bangladeshi law but, by God, they didn’t exercise any duty of care or consideration for their [sub-contracted workers]. This is important... The spirit is important; and I am talking from a pragmatic point of view; not an idealistic point of view.<sup>678</sup>

Finally, this research suggests that the financial motivations of PSCs may encourage PSCs to behave ethically with particular regards to the use of force in joint PSC-military operations. PSCs have been criticized at times for unethical behaviour that has led to friendly-fire incidences, Escalation of Force (EOF) incidences, and degraded PSC-military battlespace coordination.<sup>679</sup> Some research suggests, however, that these criticisms do not accurately represent the industry by demonstrating that PSCs have not been responsible for the great majority of friendly-fire and Escalation of Force (EOF) incidences in Iraq.<sup>680</sup> Petersohn, for example, suggests that PSC-military coordination, plus degrees of oversight and professionalism, cause international PSCs (including British PSCs) to operate with more restraint than national soldiers.<sup>681</sup>

The findings of this thesis could help to provide a more detailed explanation as to why international (including British) PSCs rarely initiated violent contact with military units and civilian personnel during the Iraq War. This thesis’ research firstly suggests that PSC personnel are incentivized to understand that security provision in a commercial context means that PSCs are accountable to perishable client bases: client safety and satisfaction must be prioritized above most or all other concerns.<sup>682</sup> Particularly between 2004 and 2008,

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<sup>677</sup> (Theme # 8); Nossal (2001) supports the possibility that links between reputation and profits will incentivize PSCs to behave according to ethical norms regardless of regulation. Nossal asserts that the need for regulation will diminish as [unethical] PMCs lose business due to lack of political and social support; [ethical] PSCs will enjoy favourable political status and not require strong regulation.

<sup>678</sup> (Interview #18)

<sup>679</sup> (Dunigan, 2011, pp. 59–61, 154; US Government: Government Accountability Office, 2005, 2006)

<sup>680</sup> Petersohn (2013, p. 482) concludes that, especially after PSC-military coordination cells were established, PSCs do not impede military effectiveness in terms of integration at the tactical level.

<sup>681</sup> (Petersohn, 2013, pp. 481–482)

<sup>682</sup> Theme #1: “The organizational objectives of PSCs are limited to commercial service provision” is comprised of focused codes #22, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30.

governments were lucrative clients for many PSCs;<sup>683</sup> facilitating PSC-military coordination efforts was in the best interest of PSCs. Furthermore, successful PSC leaders understand that security in a commercial context requires them to move away from firepower-oriented solutions and to rely more heavily on the support of local populations when devising security solutions.<sup>684</sup> Secondly, PSC personnel operate according to a common ethos derived from similar military training and experience. This ethos gives PSC personnel a common understanding of operations within hierarchical organizations and predisposes PSC personnel to accept top-down systems of oversight.<sup>685</sup> And thirdly, the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel has improved as PSC leaders have developed skills and behaviour that impact upon their subordinates' personal motivations to fulfil their roles in a professional manner.<sup>686</sup> This thesis suggests that it is likely that PSC leaders are motivated to leverage leadership to help ensure the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel.

By examining ethical behaviour in terms of motivation, it is possible to see that the ethical climate established by PSC leaders has a greater impact on the behaviour of PSC personnel than any singular financially- or legally-driven motivation. Furthermore, whilst some literature has identified speculative concerns and challenges in implementing regulations, political theorists do not appear to have given adequate attention to other drivers of ethical behaviour (beyond regulations) within PSCs. This thesis therefore contributes to debates about ensuring the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel by examining the impact of leadership. It makes a particular contribution by identifying and explaining three drivers of ethical behaviour in PSCs and 11 leadership skills and behaviours that impact upon those drivers.

### Recommendations for Regulatory and Policy Efforts

This thesis supports the view that regulatory efforts are important to encouraging private security personnel to behave within the boundaries of social and ethical norms. Codified

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<sup>683</sup> The majority of Petersohn's (2013) data is derived from the 2004 – 2008 time frame.

<sup>684</sup> Theme #5: "PSCs cannot function by following military models" is comprised of focused codes #47, 49, 105, and 118.

<sup>685</sup> Theme #3: "Military training and experience provides a baseline for PSCs" is comprised of focused codes #68, 106, 124, and 125.

<sup>686</sup> Personnel management skills that enable leaders to select fair and effective disciplinary techniques (focused codes #93 and 107), client management skills that enable leaders to mitigate unethical pressures (#114), and leadership behaviours that emphasize teamwork (#15, 20, 69, 80, 89, 111, and 131), duty of care (#21, 72, 75, and 109), vetting (#2, 10, 13, 71, 74, and 76), and service standards (#19) all motivate PSC personnel to fulfil their roles in a professional manner.

behavioural norms and standards communicate to PSC personnel the framework within which they must operate. However, the mere existence of regulations is not sufficient to ensure that PSC personnel adhere to regulations. Furthermore, regulations prescribing punishments for failing to operate within the boundaries of social and ethical norms (especially in environments where it is difficult to enforce regulations) do not guarantee the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. This thesis's findings suggest that continuous, observable acts (behaviours) can communicate the importance of adhering to social and ethical norms. The process of publically deciding, writing, and codifying regulations counts as an act but, once regulations are codified, other actions must be taken to keep up a continued emphasis. Subsequent and continuous actions can include recurrent training, regular discussion of the relevancy of behavioural standards, and transparent disciplinary proceedings for violations of regulations. In short, the real relevance of regulations is not in the regulations themselves; rather, it is in the deliberate and predictable way that regulations are decided, written, communicated, and enforced.<sup>687</sup> This section first discusses how the findings of the research underlying this thesis might be used to increase the value of the ICoC; it then discusses how the research's findings might usefully inform other government policy efforts related to 'military responsiveness' and the willingness of PSC personnel to behave ethically.

The drafting and implementation of the ICoC and ANSI/ASIS PSC.1 standards appears to represent the most prominent, international effort to codify behavioural norms and standards for the global private security industry. The findings of this thesis suggest that these standards will have a positive effect on the ethical behaviour of armed British PSC personnel. The following two charts summarize the leadership skills and behaviours that are addressed by PSC.1 standards. The following paragraphs discuss the extent to which PSC.1 standards appear to capitalize on leadership skills and behaviours that were found to be influential by this thesis. Recommendations are made throughout this section in those areas where PSC.1's ability to positively impact on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel might be improved.

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<sup>687</sup> These findings corroborate research conducted by the ERC (2000, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013) which suggests that regulation offers only a partial solution to encouraging adherence to ethical norms: leaders are ultimately responsible for establishing influential ethical climates within organizations.

<b>Influential Leadership Skills Addressed by PSC.1</b>		
<b>Skills</b>	<b>Drivers Affected</b>	<b>Addressed by PSC.1</b>
(S1) Personnel Management: Using cultural awareness to help manage cultural differences and communicate with the predominant cultures of hostile environments	(1) Understanding security in a commercial context	May merit additional attention
(S2) Policy Writing and Implementation: Using military leadership experience to help create and enforce organization-wide behaviour management sys.	(2) Understanding personal roles in establishing ethical climates	Yes
(S3) Personnel Management: Empathetically selecting fair and effective disciplinary techniques	(3) Personal motivations to fulfil role	Partially addressed
(S4) Client Management: Using clear communication skills to manage client expectations and mitigate conflicting interests	(3) Personal motivations to fulfil role	Partially addressed

<b>Influential Leadership Behaviours Addressed by PSC.1</b>		
<b>Behaviours</b>	<b>Drivers Affected</b>	<b>Addressed by PSC.1</b>
(B1) Communicating openly and honestly, using only rigorously assessed information	(2) Understanding personal roles in establishing ethical climates	Yes
(B2) Emphasizing cooperation/ collaboration/ teamwork when solving problems; avoiding authoritarian leadership styles	(2) Understanding personal roles in establishing ethical climates (3) Personal motivations to fulfil roles	Partially addressed
(B3) Training affiliated personnel (including both clients and contractors)	(2) Understanding personal roles in establishing ethical climates	Yes
(B4) Exercising a duty of care over contractors (ensuring health & safety; morale & welfare)	(3) Personal motivations to fulfil roles	Yes
(B5) Vetting affiliated personnel (including both clients and contractors)	(1) Understanding security in a commercial context (3) Personal motivations to fulfil roles	Yes
(B6) Enforcing ethics through top-down mechanisms	(2) Understanding personal roles in establishing ethical climates	Yes
(B7) Allocating adequate resources to missions (meeting service standards)	(2) Understanding personal roles in establishing ethical climates (3) Personal motivations to fulfil roles	Yes

Although training encompassing “religious, gender, and cultural issues and respect for the local population” is featured in PSC.1 standards,<sup>688</sup> it is possible that this skill set is important enough to merit additional attention in the form of its own section. PSC.1 standards discuss cultural training on equal par with tactical training such as “driving, land navigation, electronic communications, and medical aid.” However, the research underlying this thesis suggests that cultural training may have a greater impact on the behaviour of PSC

<sup>688</sup> (ASIS International, 2012c, pp. 63–65, para. A.9.3.)



personnel (particularly at the project and team-levels) with regards to reducing the total number of violent incidences between PSC personnel and LNs. Social skills that hinge upon an awareness of cultural histories, sensitivities, and customs and technical skills related to managing cultural differences were found to directly impact on the first driver of ethical behaviour: PSC personnel's understandings of security provision in a commercial context. Furthermore, cultural awareness and management skills enable contractors to develop the close, functional relationships that PSCs must have with LN populations; these skills also enable contractors to solve security problems without feeling compelled to rely on (often non-existent) firepower and material support. This thesis suggests that when leaders at all levels of decision-making authority demonstrate and emphasize 'culturally aware' personnel management skills, subordinates can better-distinguish differences between commercial and military security provision.

Personnel management, including vetting and hiring policies, is also prominently featured in PSC.1 standards;<sup>689</sup> but there are no specific measures cited for mitigating nepotism or ensuring that best practices for Human Resource Management are observed. This thesis found that using empathy to help select fair and effective disciplinary techniques can directly impact on the third driver of ethical behaviour: PSC personnel's personal motivations to fulfil the responsibilities inherent to their roles. Personnel management skills that facilitate the fair treatment and welfare of contractors (including LN contractors) appear to be particularly influential because of the strong effect that morale has on contractors' motivations. When leaders at all levels of decision-making authority make disciplinary decisions with a modicum of empathy (including decisions related to promotions, leave rotations, and retention policies), subordinates appear to be more likely to develop feelings of loyalty and an obligation to behave according to prescribed norms.

Client interests are briefly mentioned and communication is emphasized throughout the PSC.1 standards;<sup>690</sup> but there are no specific measures cited for mitigating corruption. Many participants in the research underlying this thesis felt pressured (directly or indirectly) by clients and commercial imperatives to engage in corrupt business practices. Some participants cited the corrupt procurement of contracts, visas, operating licenses, and other special favours as one of the greatest ethical risks facing the private security industry.<sup>691</sup> Pressures stemmed partially from environmental influences, commercial competition, and

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<sup>689</sup> (ASIS International, 2012c, pp. 60–62, paras. A.9.2.2. and A.9.2.3.)

<sup>690</sup> (ASIS International, 2012c, p. 65, paras. A.1. and A.9.4.)

<sup>691</sup> (Focused Code #39: 5 sources; 8 references)

(Focused Code #100; 13 sources; 35 references)

unrealistic client expectations. This thesis suggests that PSC.1 standards might be improved by placing greater emphasis on transparent reporting to clients so that it is possible to identify PSCs that are receiving special favours at a cost. Clear communication can help to manage clients' expectations, which appears to mitigate some client- and commercially-driven top-down pressures to behave unethically. When leaders at all levels of decision-making authority maintain open and clear communication with their clients (including tightly-drawn contracts that codify risk sharing in writing and daily verbal communication to reinforce performance standards), then PSC personnel are encouraged to better-adhere to prescribed ethical norms.

Teamwork appears to be featured in PSC.1 standards;<sup>692</sup> however, the phrasing of the standard could be interpreted to pertain only to serious incident management.<sup>693</sup> Furthermore, there are no specific measures cited to mitigate authoritarian leadership styles. While it might be arguable that encouraging specific leadership styles is outside of the scope of PSC.1, it is noteworthy that leadership behaviours that emphasize cooperation, collaboration, and teamwork can directly impact on the second driver of ethical behaviour: PSC personnel's understandings of their personal roles in establishing ethical climates. Inclusive behaviours, particularly those that include LNs or TCNs, can facilitate cohesion and create a shared sense of identity amongst team members. Inclusive behaviours encourage PSC personnel to remain cognizant of larger social contexts and to consider a wider range of stakeholders as they carry out their responsibilities. PSC personnel might also feel more valued knowing that they are an integral part of an organization, which leads to increased loyalty and a desire to conform to prescribed social and ethical norms.

Finally, PSC.1 standards state that PSC personnel must wear and display uniforms and markings that distinguish them from military personnel in hostile environments.<sup>694</sup> This appears to be intended to communicate the 'status' of armed contractors to local nationals. This thesis, however, suggests that uniforms and markings are even more important with regards to PSC personnel's perceptions of themselves. Visual similarities between militaries and PSCs can cause PSC personnel (as well as LNs) to perceive the organizations as similar

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<sup>692</sup> ASIS International PSC.1 standards (2012c, p. 58, para. A.9.2.) describe how many individuals and/or authorities can be encouraged to work together: "Roles, responsibilities, and authorities should also be defined, documented, and communicated for coordination with external stakeholders. This should include interactions with subcontractors, partners, suppliers, public authorities, and local communities."

<sup>693</sup> This section of the ASIS International PSC.1 standards (2012c, pp. 58–59, para. A.9.2.) appears to emphasize the importance of coordination to enable Incident Management Teams to function. This thesis suggests including texts that communicates the importance of teamwork in normal operations as well.

<sup>694</sup> (ASIS International, 2012c, p. 60, para. A.9.2.1.1.)

and, subsequently, to behave towards PSCs as they would towards the military. Without a clear understanding of the differences between militaries and PSCs, contractors are at risk of ascribing ‘military’ meanings to PSC missions based on beliefs that are not grounded in the commercial context of the private security industry. This thesis’s findings directly challenge suggestions that the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel can be improved by “professionalizing” the appearance of PSCs through *military*-style uniforms, vehicles, insignia, and operating procedures.<sup>695</sup> Although these measures may improve coordination between PSCs and militaries during co-deployments, they exacerbate identity problems and detract from PSC personnel’s understandings of security provision in a commercial context. In short, “uniform standards” do not necessarily improve contractor behaviour; distinctly *non-military* uniforms and vehicles may, however, may help contractors to adopt appropriate self-identities.

PSC.1 appears to capitalize on many of the leadership skills and behaviours identified by this thesis as having a positive effect on the ethical behaviour of armed British PSC personnel. Interview participants suggested that several of the principles and standards outlined in the ICoC were commonly problematic or difficult to achieve. These included: enforcing Rules for the Use of Force,<sup>696</sup> avoiding the inhumane or degrading treatment of others,<sup>697</sup> the selection and vetting of personnel,<sup>698</sup> and training personnel.<sup>699</sup> However, the minor modifications to the PSC.1 standards suggested by the research underlying this thesis could increase leaders’ abilities to uphold these principles and standards, potentially making the ICoC and PSC.1 standards even more effective by fully capitalizing on influential leadership skills and behaviours. As discussed above, providing PSC personnel with distinctly non-military uniforms and vehicles may help them to adopt appropriate (commercial) self-identities, subsequently making it easier for leaders to control aggressive contractors. Adding more emphasis on “religious, gender, and cultural issues and respect for the local population”<sup>700</sup> may help leaders to ensure that PSC personnel do not behave in ways that embarrass or offend members of various cultures in hostile environments. Adding specific measures to mitigate nepotism and to ensure that best practices for Human Resource Management are observed may improve leaders’ abilities to select qualified, integritous,

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<sup>695</sup> Dunigan (2011, p. 162) recommends integrating contractors into military training and mandating standardized uniforms and insignias.

<sup>696</sup> See: (ICRC, 2010, pp. 29–32) and (Focused codes #31, 32, and 37)

<sup>697</sup> See: (ICRC, 2010, pp. 35–37) and (Focused code #33)

<sup>698</sup> See: (ICRC, 2010, pp. 45–51) and (Focused code #35)

<sup>699</sup> See: (ICRC, 2010, p. 55) and (Focused codes #34 and 36)

<sup>700</sup> (ASIS International, 2012c, pp. 63–65, para. A.9.3.)

contractors and employees. PSC.1, in its current form, appears to already help leaders ensure that training is conducted at the necessary standards and intervals to ensure the safe provision of services in accordance with contractually agreed standards. This thesis offers additional support for the importance of training as it pertains to ethical behaviour.

Additionally, this thesis's finding that the real relevance of the ICoC (and other regulations) is not in the ICoC itself but in the way that the ICoC is implemented<sup>701</sup> could help to manage people's expectations and inform their usage of the ICoC. The ICoC is only one pertinent document amongst many and, without diminishing its importance, the value of the ICoC appears to be as limited as that of other rules, standards, codes, and regulations. Regulations are important but, once regulations are codified, other continuous, observable actions must be taken to keep up a continued emphasis.

In addition to informing regulatory efforts related to PSC.1 and the ICoC, this research may also usefully inform other government policy efforts, particularly those related to the impact of PSCs (and their behaviour) on military responsiveness. "Responsiveness" is a measure of military effectiveness that refers to the "ability to tailor military activity to a state's own capabilities, its adversaries' capabilities, and external constraints. In the broadest sense, it refers to a military's capacity to respond to new information about itself, its adversaries, and its environment."<sup>702</sup> Current debates about the impact of PSCs on military responsiveness appear to hinge on assessments of PSCs' willingness behave ethically; that is, to adhere to social and ethical norms. Dunigan, for example, suggests that, when militaries adopt a "winning of hearts and minds" approach to counterinsurgency, PSCs can degrade military responsiveness by failing to adhere to ethical norms related to International Humanitarian Laws (IHLs);<sup>703</sup> however, PSCs' non-adherence to ethical norms (IHLs) can improve responsiveness when militaries adopt a "draining of the sea" (brutal) approach to counterinsurgency operations. According to Dunigan, one advantage of PSCs is their willingness to take on "dirty jobs" that democratic governments are reluctant to do themselves.<sup>704</sup> Leander arrives to similar conclusions although via different logic: PSCs may not deliberately hinder national military forces but they do degrade military responsiveness

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<sup>701</sup> (Theme #17 comprised of focused codes #9. 16. 56-67, 70 and 121)

<sup>702</sup> (R. A. Brooks, 2007, p. 11)

<sup>703</sup> (Dunigan, 2011)

<sup>704</sup> Dunigan (2011, pp. 45, 155) does not expressly define "dirty jobs" but suggests that these are tasks or operational styles that violate International Humanitarian Laws. Merom (2003, p. 24) asserts that strong, democratic states fail during counterinsurgency campaigns in large part because they are unable to justify the brutal methods and casualties necessary to winning to their voting populations.

by “draining resources and worsening security coverage,” thus impeding the development and flexibility of state security institutions.<sup>705</sup>

While the assessments mentioned above may be correct in some circumstances, government policy makers should be aware of ways in which leadership skills and behaviours can influence the willingness of PSC personnel to behave ethically. The willingness of PSCs to adhere to IHLs or take on dirty jobs is not a static determination. Further research is necessary to determine the *range* of conditions in which PSC personnel may be more or less likely to adhere to IHLs or take on “dirty jobs.” This thesis suggests that understanding leadership’s influence on ethical behaviour will help future researcher’s to determine that range.

For example: the political systems of strong states and weak states may support different approaches to counterinsurgency; however, the findings of this thesis suggest that British PSCs are influenced by British military values. Britain, a strong, democratic state, is compelled to adhere to a “winning hearts and minds” strategy during counterinsurgency operations.<sup>706</sup> This thesis suggests that British military values are in accordance with that strategy and cultural carry-over allows those values to have some impact on the conduct of British PSC personnel. Additionally, British PSCs appear to provide services primarily to the governments and commercial organizations of strong states. While British PSCs might also provide services to weak states, weak states are minority customers in unstable markets. When PSC leaders’ understandings of security in a commercial context are taken into account, it appears unlikely that many British PSC leaders would take the reputational risks associated with doing “dirty jobs” or even doing legal jobs in a “dirty” way. From a rational leader’s perspective, incidences of unethical behaviour (including violations of IHL) in hostile environments can be seen as both unintended and undesirable. Policy makers who assume that PSC personnel are less likely to adhere to ethical norms when employed by commercial organizations<sup>707</sup> might make different decisions if they were to incorporate leadership-related influences into their assessments.

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<sup>705</sup> (Leander, 2005)

<sup>706</sup> Merom (2003, p. 24) depicts a conundrum facing strong, democratic states that makes “winning hearts and minds” the only politically suitable counterinsurgency strategy: ““Democracies fail in small wars because they cannot find a winning balance between the costs of war in terms of human lives and the political cost incurred by controlling the latter with force; between acceptable levels of casualties and acceptable levels of brutality [against foreign populations]...” There is “an almost impossible trade-off between expedient and moral dicta that arise from an intricate interplay between forces in the battlefield and at home.”

<sup>707</sup> (Andrés, 2012, p. 231; Krahmann, 2008, pp. 259–260; Minow, 2004, p. 1021; Schreier & Caparini, 2005, p. 46)

## Summary

Thus far, literature addressing regulation, policy making, and ethical behaviour appears to be dominated by debates over whether or not the behaviour of PSCs and personnel can be adequately controlled through national or international regulation. Early literature included discussions of options for regulation;<sup>708</sup> which rapidly gave way to a more critical focus on how inadequate, unclear, or absent regulation has a negative impact on ethical behaviour.<sup>709</sup> A lack of regulation is often said to lead to accountability issues by enabling human rights violations to go unanswered and failing to incentivize the judicious employment of force.<sup>710</sup> Other authors discuss the inefficiencies of external control mechanisms, which include contract compliance and oversight mechanisms.<sup>711</sup> Most authors informing the debate, however, do not go beyond discussing regulation as an end-state. Dunigan, for example, concludes that several forms of national or international regulations could force PSCs to adopt military appearances and working styles, increasing their “professionalism” and triggering a chain reaction that ultimately leads to better behaved PSC personnel.<sup>712</sup> Percy, Kinsey, Tiefer, and Gomez del Prado discuss national and international regulation and, similarly to Dunigan, conclude only that more comprehensive regulatory systems are needed. Terry, Walker, and Berrios go one step further by discussing mechanisms for enforcing compliance with regulatory systems; but these mechanisms continue to be grounded in legal codes and regulation. In short: ‘regulations should exist to direct the behaviour of PSC personnel; and more regulations should exist to dictate what will happen if PSC personnel do not behave as directed.’ There is an implicit assumption that the existence and enforcement of regulation is sufficient to bring about desirable behaviour within PSCs.

This thesis’ focus is on how leadership impacts on the willingness of PSC personnel to adhere to rules, regulations, and social and ethical norms, thus moving the focus of the debate

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<sup>708</sup> (Foreign Commonwealth Office, 2002; Kinsey, 2005a, 2005c; Lilly, 1998; Singer, 2003b); Although Huntington (1981) did not address PSCs directly, critics of the private security industry often rely on Huntingtonian ideals, asserting that state control over professionalized armed forces is the best way for ensuring the ethical behaviour of people and organizations that provide public security. The recent rise of the private security industry challenges Huntingtonian ideals of civilian control over the use of armed force.

<sup>709</sup> (Gómez del Prado, 2012; Kinsey, 2008; Percy, 2007, 2012; Tiefer, 2009)

<sup>710</sup> (Bakker, 2009; Chapman, 2010; Chesterman, 2010; Groth, 2012; Hedahl, 2012, pp. 177–178; Leander, 2010; Mehra, 2009; Rothe & Ross, 2010; Snell, 2011; Tarzwell, 2009; Thurnher, 2008)

<sup>711</sup> (Berrios, 2006; Schwartz & Swain, 2011, p. 24; Terry, 2010; Walker, 2008)

<sup>712</sup> Dunigan (2011, p. 162) recommends integrating contractors into military training and mandating standardized uniforms and insignias; she suggests that provisions can be written in to contracts to ensure compliance (p.166). While the use of the UCMJ or MEJA to control TCNs or non-DOD contracts is questionable, these codes could be made to apply to DOD-contracted personnel. Domestic regulations can influence US-hired PSCs operating outside of the US. PSCs can also fall under host country national law and SOFA agreements.

away from regulation and onto the more general drivers of ethical behaviour. This thesis offers an alternate viewpoint by suggesting that regulation plays a role in ensuring the ethical behaviour of private security personnel, but that regulation's role is indirect: ethical climates motivate PSC personnel to behave ethically, while "writing and implementing" regulations (or policies) is just one of 11 leadership skills and behaviours that PSC leaders can leverage to create ethical climates.<sup>713</sup> The mere existence of regulations does not singularly motivate people to adhere to social and ethical norms; conversely, the absence of regulation does not prevent people from adhering to social and ethical norms.<sup>714</sup> Identifying how leaders can influence those drivers and the extent to which leadership is influential is a prerequisite for writing and implementing effective regulations (or policies). As suggested by the following participant, regulations are unlikely to have the desired effect if not accompanied by a well-maintained ethical climate:

No. [Regulation] doesn't guarantee [desired behaviour]...It aspires to do that, but it doesn't. Only good internal discipline, good internal auditing, and good external auditing will have the affect you want. You can have a thousand regulations and beautiful books but if you're not careful, then you'll have [the books] here and you'll have that [behaviour] there and a massive gap in the middle.<sup>715</sup>

This thesis presents a new understanding of the drivers of ethical behaviour within PSCs that goes beyond the commercial motivations of companies and personnel and accounts for other factors that can be equally or more influential.<sup>716</sup> To influence the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel, it appears that understanding self-identity and cultural, institutional, and environmental pressures is important.

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<sup>713</sup> (Focused code #108: 6 sources; 7 references); The 11 leadership skills and behaviours are shown in the table: "Summary of Influential Leadership Skills" and table: "Summary of Influential Leadership Behaviours"

<sup>714</sup> (Focused code #61: 7 sources; 10 references)

<sup>715</sup> (Interview #12)

<sup>716</sup> (Focused codes #115 and 116)

## **Chapter Eight: Conclusion**

To conclude this thesis, this chapter first provides an overview that explains the goals and contributions of each chapter. The purpose of this overview is to demonstrate the chain of logic that was followed to reach the thesis's final outcome. This chapter closes by making some recommendations for additional research that might further improve our understanding of the impact of leadership on the ethical behaviour of British (and worldwide) private security personnel.

### **Overview of the Thesis**

The motivation for this thesis was the recognition that the private security industry is increasing in size, scope, and relevance; yet, control mechanisms to ensure that private security personnel adhere to social and ethical norms have not been fully developed. Thus far, government, civilian, and industry stakeholders have sought to develop systems of self-regulation as the primary means of governing PSC personnel's behaviour. The focus on self-regulation has stemmed largely from the fact that many PSCs operate in hostile environments where external control agents have limited abilities to monitor and/or discipline unethical PSC personnel; additionally, some authors assert that there is a lack of political will to regulate the activities of PSCs. Systems of self-regulation rely on internal control agents (PSC leaders) who lack legal authority. PSC leaders are, in large part, reliant on their individual leadership capabilities to leverage power and influence the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. Therefore, the extent to which the leadership skills and behaviours of PSC leaders can influence the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel is a critical issue that should inform stakeholders' efforts to govern PSCs.

To determine the extent to which leadership skills and behaviours influence the ethical behaviour of private security personnel, this thesis posed three sub-questions:

- 1) What are the drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments?
- 2) Which leadership skills and behaviours affect those drivers of ethical behaviour?
- 3) What is the magnitude of leadership's impact on the drivers of ethical behaviour?

These sub-questions guide the thesis's main line of inquiry and enable a systematic approach to answering the central research question. One outcome of the thesis was evidence to suggest that there are three main drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile



environments. A second outcome was the identification of influential skills and behaviours that stakeholders can observe, audit, measure, and/or foster. A third and final outcome was the identification of links between the specific skills and behaviours and the three drivers of ethical behaviour. These links enabled the thesis to determine, to a limited extent, the magnitude of leadership's influence. The central research question and its sub-questions enabled this thesis to address important gaps in PSC and leadership literature.

The methodology that was selected to gather and analyze data appeared to be satisfactory in that it enabled the central research question and its sub-questions to be answered. The interpretivist theoretical framework selected for this thesis allowed for the discussion of highly contextual subjects. Different understandings of leadership and ethics were accounted without the need for (positivist) empirical observations or (critical) system-changing agendas. The grounded theory methodological framework selected for the research underlying this thesis facilitated the discovery of new information in the previously unresearched area of leadership within PSCs. Adopting a specifically constructivist approach allowed for both the research participants and the researcher to create meanings together during the data gathering process. This appeared to be a successful combination of approaches evidenced by the collection of original data and the detailed discussions that were made possible by the analytical process.

By way of theoretical integration,<sup>717</sup> Chapter Five: *Analyses of Findings* successfully combined, compared, and contrasted the codes and themes presented in Chapter Four to form a detailed narrative predicated on the relationships that the themes share with each other. The end result of Chapter Five was a detailed narrative that helped to explain the extent to which leadership influences the ethical behaviour of British private security contractors operating in hostile environments.<sup>718</sup> In Chapter Six: *Discussion of Other Empirical Evidence*, empirical evidence originating from outside of the private security industry was used to help corroborate the findings of the research underlying this thesis through information triangulation. A limited amount of information was found, however, there were sufficient sources to suggest support for three out of the four leadership skills and all seven of the leadership behaviours identified in this thesis has being important. Having supported the

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<sup>717</sup> In research using a GT methodology, this analytical process can be considered synonymous with “theoretical sorting” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 216).

<sup>718</sup> Grounded Theory research normally seeks to generate either a substantive theory, which explains phenomena within specific contexts, or a formal theory, which explains phenomena across a range of contexts (Glaser, 2007, pp. 97–99). This GT research seeks only to provide new information that might be useful to generating a new substantive theory in the future. An explanation of this limited goal is provided in Chapter Three's discussion of the theoretical and methodological frameworks selected to guide this study.

assertions of this thesis to the extent possible, Chapter Seven: *Implications of the Findings*, discussed the findings of this thesis in relation to existing debates on civil society's ability to ensure that PSC personnel adhere to the ethical norms that underpin national and international laws. Several of the findings of this thesis directly contributed new information to debates over whether the commercial context in which PSCs operate hinders their ability to behave ethically or to perform their duties in an ethical manner. The results of the research underlying this thesis were also successfully used to suggest ways in which current regulatory efforts (namely, PSC.1, which provides an auditable list of standards by which PSCs can demonstrate their adherence to the ICoC) could be strengthened and current governments can address concerns related to the impact of PSCs on military responsiveness.

Although some important methodological, design, and instrument limitations must be recognized when applying this thesis's findings, these limitations do not prevent this research from adding to the body of knowledge. During GT research, conducting an extensive literature review before data is collected and analyzed, can corrupt emerging theories with preconceived ideas. The research underlying this thesis sought to contribute to the generation of a new, factor-relating theory and so a more-detailed literature review to develop a sense of the key concerns of stakeholders regarding PSCs and ethical behaviour was employed. Coding has been criticised as an unreliable and inaccurate data analysis technique because many coders are prone to using intuition; however, researcher triangulation was employed to at least partially mitigate concerns. Finally, the validity, accuracy, precision, and reliability of semi-structured interview guides has been questioned because data can be lost or mishandled due to language barriers, transcribing errors, and misunderstandings during human interaction. The research underlying this thesis incorporated reflexivity into its interviews to at least partially mitigate concerns. In the final analysis of the limitations inherent to the research underlying this thesis, limitations appear to have been mitigated to the extent possible. This thesis's findings are useful for helping to determine the degree to which leadership skills and behaviour impact upon the ethical behaviour of British PSCs and contractors.

This thesis adds to the body of knowledge on PSCs by contributing new, leadership-related information to existing debates about how to ensure the ethical behaviour of PSCs. This thesis also adds to the body of knowledge on leadership by helping to determine the extent to which leadership influences the ethical behaviour of people within a unique type of

organization: Private Security Companies.<sup>719</sup> As a final contribution, this thesis focuses specifically on British PSCs, which make up an important part of the global private security industry.

### Recommendations for Additional Research

Research utilizing a GT methodology is designed to create new theory rather than to apply or test existing theories. This thesis discovered new information that could be useful to the future development of a substantive theory explaining the drivers of ethical behaviour within British PSCs and the leadership skills and behaviours that impact upon those drivers. Additional research to fully develop and test a substantive theory regarding leadership and ethical behaviour in British PSCs would help to support or challenge this thesis's findings. Furthermore, the GT methodology encourages researchers to sample for diversity rather than representativeness. Testing a new theory using a sample population that is representative of the greater PSC population would help to determine the generalizability of this thesis's findings. Reproducing this thesis's research on a PSC population made up of US companies would achieve more-representative results simply because the US market makes up a much larger percentage of the total PSC population.

Additionally, there were several categories that were not saturated during the data collection process due to limited time and resources. Additional research may be able to collect enough data to reveal new and important findings. One category that could be further researched is that of the 'maritime sector.' The semi-structured interview guide was modified to include questions about the maritime sector, however very few participants were interviewed who had first-person experience within this part of the private security industry. Additional research is necessary to determine if this thesis's findings pertain equally to maritime security personnel. Another issue that merits further research is the potential relationship between 'age and military rank' and 'experience and ethics.' Only one participant stated that he perceived a strong link between these factors;<sup>720</sup> however, the research underlying this thesis did not use a statistically representative sample population. It remains possible that this participant's perception is representative (or, perhaps, more representative) than the low frequency of occurrence suggests.

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<sup>719</sup> PSCs are "unresearched" only with regards to leadership. Many other aspects of PSCs have been heavily researched.

<sup>720</sup> (1 of 24 participants = 4.1%)

Finally, the empirical sources of information originating from outside of the private security industry examined in Chapter Six did not directly address the impact of leadership on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel and so inferences drawn from these sources should be considered provisional. Mental health and welfare research indirectly suggests that leadership is a factor in the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel but the links could be strengthened through further examination. Academic research and government documents more directly suggest that leadership is an important influence factor, however, the examples reviewed in Chapter Six are confined to one PSC market that is, in many ways, not representative of the global market in which British PSCs operate. And, finally, reports written by NGO and humanitarian aid organizations indirectly point to the influence of leadership skills and behaviours; but these reports stop short of pointedly examining skills and behaviours that might help leaders to influence the actions of PSC personnel. Each of these information sources support this thesis' assertion that certain aspects of leadership can be leveraged to bring about changes in behaviour, but further research would further increase their value.

Empirical evidence from outside of the industry would add even more value to this thesis if it were to examine the behaviour of PSC personnel over a longer period of time; for example, before and after important events such as the implementation of new policies in PSCs, NGOs, or other client organizations; or, before and after the implementation of the ICoC, which is international and not isolated to one market. As the industry develops, it will be possible to gather additional evidence of the impact of leadership on the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel. Regulations have evolved considerably since the first drafting of the Montreux Document in 2008. ANSI/ASIS PSC.1 standards, for example, are still new to the industry and the first accreditations were issued only in 2014.<sup>721</sup> Over time, the results of these new standards will become apparent and future research will have new data to bring about new understandings. Furthermore, Iraq and Afghanistan, which were major markets for many PSCs and the locations of several high-profile occurrences of unethical behaviour, have now drawn down. These test grounds are no longer available but it is not unreasonable to believe that new markets will arise in the future. Additional longitudinal research examining PSCs in other markets over time would offer additional support (or present additional challenges) to the findings of the research underlying this thesis.

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<sup>721</sup> Olive Group claims to have received the *first* PSC.1 accreditation in February 2014 (Olive Group, 2014). In a personal correspondence with a representative from Aegis Defence Services, this claim of *first* was questioned. Aegis and Olive were the first two PSCs to undergo the accreditation process in October-November 2013 and both PSCs were (allegedly) awarded the accreditation at the same time.

## Summary

This chapter concluded the thesis with an overview summarizing each of the thesis's preceding chapters. The overview provided a recap of the goals and contributions of each chapter in order to demonstrate the chain of logic that led the thesis's findings. A discussion of the wider relevancy of this thesis's findings provided a platform for discussing the significance of the thesis and recommending ways in which its findings might be usefully compared to existing theories of ethical leadership and contemporary debates involving PSCs. It appears reasonable to suggest that future research comparing this thesis with existing theories of ethical leadership could lead to new information about the skills and behaviours that promote organization-wide ethical climates. It appears also reasonable to suggest that future research incorporating this thesis into debates about the wider impact of PSCs could help to explain what impact (if any) PSCs have on military effectiveness and democratic advantages. The final recommendations made in this chapter pertain to additional research that could improve upon the methodological and resource limitations inherent to this PhD thesis.

## Appendix A: Gatekeeper Approach Letters

### The Importance of Ethical Standards for Contractors

REC Reference Number: REP (WSG)/11/12-44



**Addressed to:** Director of Human Resources [names used where known]  
Director of Corporate Social Responsibility

Ensuring high ethical standards for Private Security Companies (PSCs) and their contractors is a major concern for government, civil society, and industry stakeholders. This concern is currently being addressed through regulatory efforts but evidence reveals that the establishment and enforcement of ethical standards is largely dependent on the leadership found within PSCs themselves.

As a leading British PSC and signatory to the ICoC, I invite your company to take part in an exploratory research project that will answer important questions affecting policy-makers' perceptions of the UK's self-regulated private security industry; future regulatory efforts and your company may be affected in-turn.

This is a fully-funded post-graduate study supervised by the War Studies department at King's College London. Participation in this research is voluntary and anonymous; and you reserve the right to withdraw from this study at anytime without giving a reason. Your input, however, would be an invaluable contribution. By taking part, you will help to develop an accurate understanding of the impact that leaders can have on the establishment and enforcement of ethical standards within the industry.

The following page offers a brief description of this research and its benefits. Please feel free to contact me anytime with your questions or to schedule a discussion. Should you seek additional confirmation of this research and its goals, you are welcome to contact either of the project's supervisors at Kings College London.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Philip Strand'.

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## The Importance of Ethical Standards for Contractors

REC Reference Number: REP (WSG)/11/12-44



**Addressed to:** Leaders and managers within private security companies

Ensuring high ethical standards for Private Security Companies (PSCs) and their contractors is a major concern for government, civil society, and industry stakeholders. This concern is currently being addressed through regulatory efforts but evidence suggests that the establishment and enforcement of ethical standards is largely dependent on the leadership found within PSCs themselves.

As a post-graduate researcher within the War Studies department at King's College London, I am leading this exploratory research project to answer important questions that will affect policy-makers' perceptions of the UK's self-regulated private security industry: future regulatory efforts and PSCs may be affected in-turn.

As a private security contractor with leadership and managerial experience, I would like to invite you to take part in this research. Participation in this research is voluntary and anonymous; and you reserve the right to withdraw from this study at anytime without giving a reason. Your input, however, would be an invaluable contribution. By taking part, you will help to develop an accurate understanding of the impact that leaders can have on the establishment and enforcement of ethical standards within the industry.

The following page offers a brief description of this research and its benefits. I am available to you anytime to take your questions or schedule a discussion. Should you seek additional confirmation of this research and its goals, you are welcome to contact either of my supervisors at Kings College London.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Philip Strand'.

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## **Appendix B: Research Information Sheet & Informed Consent Form**

### **The Importance of Ethical Standards for Contractors**

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#### **Research Overview:**

The UK government's decision to allow its private security industry to be self-regulated has generated significant discussion. Some critics have questioned whether self-regulation can effectively guarantee high ethical standards; others have asserted that more stringent regulations are necessary. Research reveals that even if external monitoring and regulatory systems were more stringent, companies' individual ethical climates and the actions of immediate supervisors often have more influence over peoples' behaviour than written regulations.

The goal of this research is to gain a better understanding of how PSC leaders at the corporate, regional, and project levels can influence the ethical decisions of their personnel in places where governments and NGOs have limited monitoring or disciplinary power. To fully understand leader influence, this research relies on interviews and discussions with leaders throughout PSCs' hierarchies; it also relies on codes of conduct, Standard Operating Procedures, HR policies, and other internally-produced control measures and guidelines.

The outcome of this research will be an explanation of the general magnitude of leadership's influence on ethical behaviour within British PSCs and exactly which leadership skills and behaviours are more (or less) influential. This research will be used to inform on-going debates about how to best ensure that British PSCs adhere to ethical and behavioural norms. Because ethics has an impact on organizational effectiveness, the outcome of this research may also be indirectly applicable to on-going debates about the impact that PSCs have on national and international security agendas.

#### **Requesting your support**

I request your support in the form of an informal discussion based on your experiences as a corporate-, regional-, project-, or team-level leader. Your perspective will help this research to understand the options available to PSC leaders who must direct and influence people in hostile environments. The responses of all interview participants (including yours) will be anonymized: personal names, company names, locations, and dates will be deleted from all transcripts and quotes.

Any perspectives you may have regarding company standards and practices related to the establishment of an ethical climate will also be helpful. For example, you may have thoughts or ideas regarding vetting, hiring and dismissal policies; codes of conduct; or how companies communicate with their contractors, and external (government and NGO) authorities. Discussions can be conducted entirely at your convenience but would probably need to be between 30-45 minutes to be effective.

#### **What are the benefits?**

By participating in this research, you will be providing valuable insight into the state of leadership within the British private security industry. Our (anonymous) discussion will contribute to a report that decision-makers within PSCs and the UK government can use to determine the future direction of the industry. You will be entitled to receive a free copy of the final report which will include discussions about: (a) Corporate Social Responsibility within the private security industry and (b) how this research's findings relate to ongoing debates over PSC self-regulation in the UK and the impact of PSCs on (inter-)national security agendas.

#### **Who can I talk to for more information?**

To ask questions and/or to volunteer to participate in this ground-breaking study, please contact the lead researcher:



## INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH STUDIES

Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research.



### The Importance of Ethical Standards for Contractors

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**Thank you for considering taking part in this research. The person organising the research must explain the project to you before you agree to take part. If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.**

Please tick  
or initial

- I understand that if I decide at any time during the research that I no longer wish to participate in this project, I can notify the researcher and withdraw from it immediately without giving any reason. Furthermore, I understand that I will be able to withdraw my data up until **01MAY2014**, which is approximately three months prior to the drafting of the final report. ☐
- I understand that interviews will be audio recorded to ensure all information is accurately captured; recordings will be deleted immediately upon transcription and I will have a chance to review and give final approval over the anonymized transcript of my interview. ☐
- I understand that the information I have submitted will be published as a report but confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained; it will not be possible to identify me from any publications. ☐
- I consent to my responses being saved in an anonymized form (all company names, personal names, locations, and dates being deleted) on an encrypted storage device for use by other researchers in future research studies. ☐
- I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me. I am not required to give any sensitive personal information. I understand that such information will be handled in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. ☐
- I would like to receive a copy of the final report ☐

### Participant's Statement:

I, [name] \_\_\_\_\_ agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the study. I have read both the notes written above and the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research study involves.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix C: Interview Guide**

### **To what extent does leadership influence the ethical behaviour of PSC personnel in hostile environments?**

- [1] What are the drivers of ethical behaviour for contractors in hostile environments?
- [2] Which leadership skills and behaviours affect those drivers?
- [3] What is the magnitude of leadership's impact on those drivers?

### **Personal Questions for 1-on-1 Interviews:**

#### **I. Open-ended Questions**

- 1) [1] Please describe your role and primary responsibilities?
- 2) [1] What are the critical tasks or concerns that seem to require the most attention?
- 3) [1] In your experience, what are the most common ethical challenges inherent to operating in a hostile environment?
- 4) [1] Have ethical challenges changed as you've moved into new positions or companies?
- 5) [1] How much importance do your leaders seem to assign to ethical behaviour?
- 6) [1] Which practices or policies (if any) most clearly reveal the priority that a company (or leader) places on ethical behaviour?
- 7) [1] Is there anything that you (or others) can do to create or prevent ethical dilemmas for subordinate employees?
- 8) [3] Whose actions (yours or others) ultimately have the most impact when it comes to ensuring the ethical behaviour of contractors in hostile environments?
- 9) [2] What people, codes, rules, or training do you find most helpful when you are faced with solving an ethical problem?
- 10) [1] Are there any people or pressures that detract from your ability to make ethical decisions / act ethically?

#### **II. Critical Incident Questions**

Think of a time when you have intervened in a situation to stop something unethical from happening (you do not have to explain the situation if you do not want to).

- 11) [2] What training or knowledge did you possess that helped you to influence other people involved in the situation?
- 12) [2] What actions did you take (or could you have taken) to prevent the situation or to influence other people involved?

#### **III. Open Conversation**

- 13) [1, 2, 3] Are there any other thoughts you'd like to add to this subject?

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